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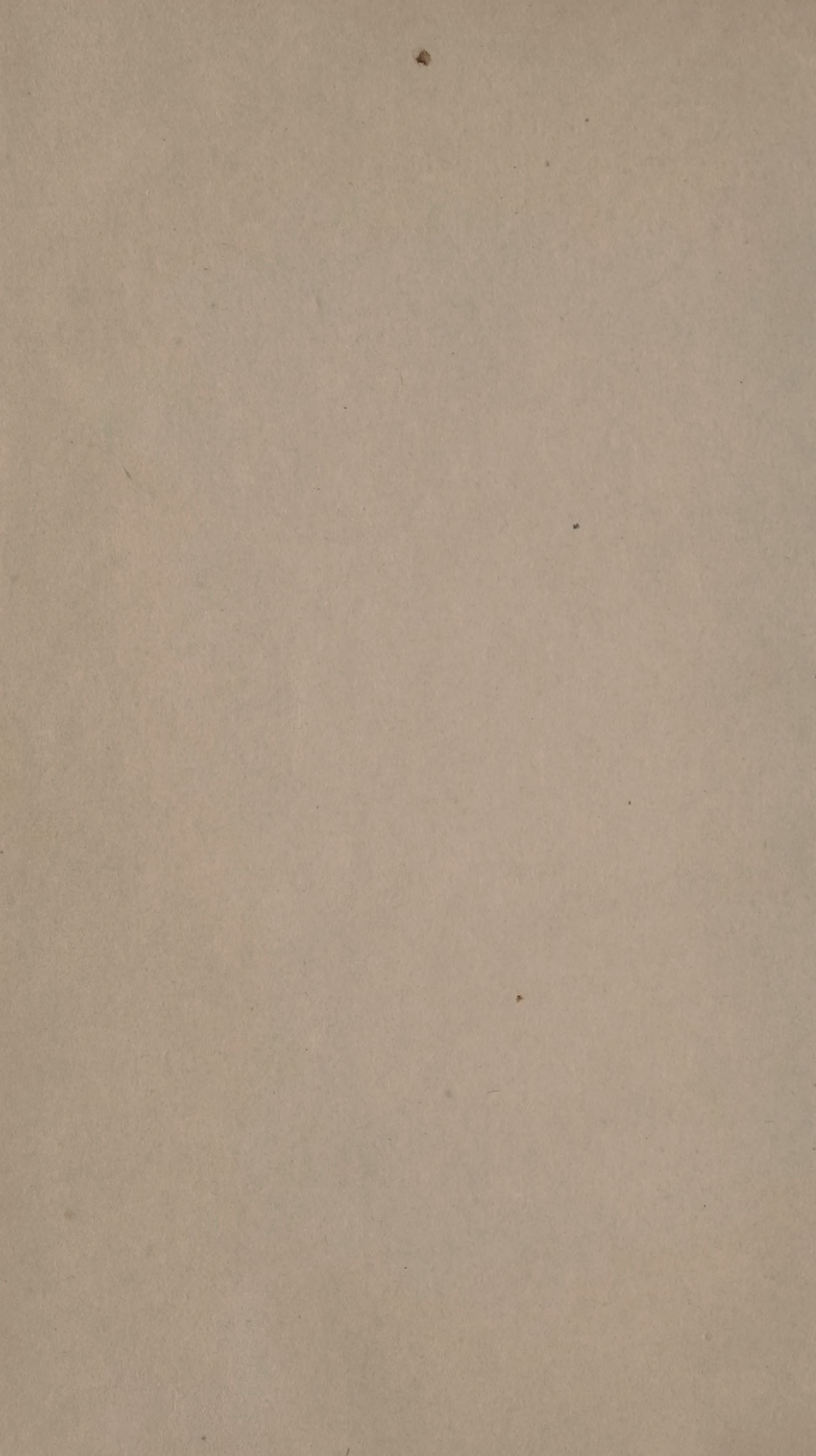
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ALFRED DE ROSANN;

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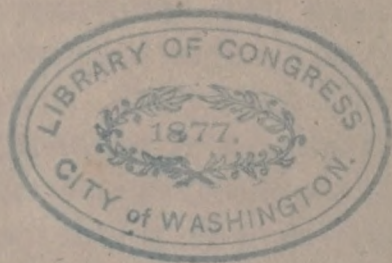
THE ADVENTURES OF A FRENCH GENTLEMAN.

BY

GEORGE W. M. REYNOLDS.

35  
IN TWO VOLUMES.

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# ALFRED DE ROSANN.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE BREAKFAST.

“My dear friend,” said Mr. Clayton to De Rosann, when they had retired from the spot where Eloise still lingered a few minutes, to follow them with her eyes—for the affectionate girl was never tired of gazing upon her lover: “My dear friend, you must nerve yourself to hear more sad news, of which it is my duty to make you aware.”

“Speak!—O speak!” cried De Rosann, a convulsive shudder passing through his frame.

“Not to keep you in suspense any longer,” returned Mr. Clayton, “my sister-in-law is averse to—”

“My love for her daughter Eloise,” added De Rosann. “I fancied as much this morning—last night—whatever might be the hour—when I aided you to carry her in the chair to yonder barn. O I guessed her secret thoughts from the chilling manner in which she received me. But I did not suffer her unkindness to vex me; for she dare not oppose the wishes of her daughter in a matter of such vital importance to that daughter’s felicity.”

“Alas! you do not know Mrs. Clayton, De Rosann: she fancies she is acting right, because she acts conscientiously; and when a mother has those ideas, it is difficult to eradicate them from her mind.”



"But your influence, Mr. Clayton—your advice—Eloise's tears—a beloved child's, an only child's prayers, Mr. Clayton—joined to my supplication on bended knees—in that humiliating posture, my dear sir—"

"Calm yourself, Alfred; you speak at random : let us converse quietly and rationally—as men, and not as stage-actors. Pardon this rebuke; I am familiar with you, De Rosann, because I love you as a relative—as a son; and you may rely upon my aid in all your embarrassments. Why! would you believe it, that when we debated as to which sea-port town we should go to, in order to pass the summer, I suggested St. Malo, to be as near as possible to you; and thus, on our journey thither, has the fortunate breaking of our carriage enabled us to meet."

"So deep a debt of gratitude shall I never be able to repay; but, as long as you are my friend, I do not despair of possessing Eloise," exclaimed De Rosann.

"You must not think of moving her mother," said Mr. Clayton, "by tears and prayers. My sister-in-law thinks she acts from motives purely conscientious, and bearing reference to nothing save her daughter's welfare; whereas I fancy that a little sentiment of pride has a certain influence on her actions. She has an idea that her father was some great personage—you know she is of French extraction!"

"Yes; Eloise has occasionally spoken of her grandfather," returned De Rosann.

"But Eloise has never related to you any particulars relative to his extraordinary disappearance, *et cetera*?" inquired Mr. Clayton.

"Never," answered Alfred. "You know we were seldom alone for five minutes together, during the whole period when I was accustomed to visit at your house; and Eloise rarely alluded to her deceased relatives in the presence of her mother."

"Well, the history is somewhat long, and I will tell it to you on another occasion," said Mr. Clayton; "but I was remarking, that perhaps a little pride may



have something to do with my sister-in-law's present repugnance to the union of yourself and her daughter. She has imbibed the idea that her father was a French nobleman of rank and fortune, and has persuaded herself that she must honour his name and his family—although she be unacquainted with both—to the utmost of her ability. All women have some weakness of the kind, De Rosann; and we must look with a charitable eye on the failings of our fellow-creatures. Let us therefore devise some plan by which we can surmount the obstacles which diametrically oppose your wishes."

"You forget, my dear Sir, that I am an outlawed being—an individual whom the first Gendarme may arrest as a criminal—a felon escaped from the galleys. No profession—no trade can receive me: my sole hope is in the secret service to which I am more or less attached; and if I could obtain a deeper insight into the mysterious sources of power and intrigue which have ere now assisted me, I might be enabled to procure a full pardon; for the hand that commanded the stamp and the endorsement of the authorities at the *Prefecture de Police*, can doubtless obtain the royal signature to an act of mercy or justice."

"Your observations are those of a wise man, Alfred," said Mr. Clayton; "and if you would follow my advice—"

"The counsel of so distinguished a friend is a command to me," interrupted De Rosann, looking up to his companion with a species of filial attachment and respect.

"Nay, my dear boy," returned Mr. Clayton, flattered by this remark; "I do not mean to usurp a power which I have no right to assume. But if you relish my advice, follow it; and on the present occasion, I should think that you would do well:—nay more, I should even strongly recommend you to hasten to Paris, and seek an interview with Leblond. He is, perhaps, merely an agent; but he evidently knows more than you relative to the service he is



embarked in ; and by the help of a bribe—for I dare say he is like the generality of the world, poor or avaricious—you may obtain some valuable information at his hands. And this idea puts me in mind of another, De Rosann—a delicate subject, it is true.”

“Speak,” said Alfred ; “you need not be under any restraint with me, particularly since I possess your friendship.”

“I am glad you have uttered these words,” cried Mr. Clayton joyfully ; “they have relieved me of half the awkwardness of my task. But to the point. De Rosann, I know the present state of your circumstances—do not interrupt me ; and am delighted that capricious fortune has put it in my power to aid you—that is, to do the same towards you as you would have done towards me had I stood in your position, and you in mine. This pocket-book,” he continued, taking one from the breast of his coat, “contains bills upon a merchant’s house, at St. Malo, for twenty thousand francs ; they are payable to the bearer, and therefore do not require my endorsement. You will give me your note of hand on another occasion.”

De Rosann received the pocket-book with thanks. The gentlemanly and kind manner in which it was tendered did not admit of another objection, on the part of even the most fastidious.

“It is, therefore, well understood,” said Mr. Clayton, continuing the conversation for the express purpose of appearing to dismiss from his memory the pecuniary transaction which had just taken place, “that you do not speak to my sister-in-law at present, relative to your engagement with Eloise—that you immediately proceed to Paris, and endeavour to make a friend, or rather a tool of Leblond—that you write to me as often as you choose, feeling certain of receiving exact replies ; and that the ladies and myself will remain at St. Malo for the present, until I see how matters turn out, and what afflictions or blessings fortune may have in store for us.”

“I shall correspond with you as often as I know



the slightest incident worth relating," answered De Rosann : then, after a moment's hesitation, he added, "and if I were occasionally to enclose a line to Eloise, my dear Mr. Clayton?"

"It would be punctually delivered," was the prompt reply.

"To prove that your noble confidence does not stand even the remotest chance of being abused, I shall invariably leave the notes intended for Eloise unsealed."

"In which case I shall as invariably send them back to you," returned Mr. Clayton. "Now, attend to me, Alfred. I am not a mere go-between—a cat's-paw in this affair ; but I act from principle, and with the firmest conviction of your honourable intentions. I love my niece too much to sacrifice her happiness for want of a little complaisance on my part ; and I should not be ashamed if all the world were made aware of my conduct. So seal your letters, De Rosann: a man who could act basely towards the purest of God's creatures would be a wretch only fit to be trampled under foot."

De Rosann was about to reply in suitable terms to this last proof of Mr. Clayton's excellent heart and noble disposition, when a loud cry of "Stop him ! stop him !" met his ears ; and in a moment Azor rushed past, with a large bone in his mouth. De Rosann suspected somewhat of the real truth ; and he was not exceedingly astonished to see Champignon, the white night-cap on his head, and the soup-ladle in his hand, pursuing the fugitive animal at a pace that did not give much promise of overtaking him. Champignon's face was smeared with flour, save the tips of his nose and chin, which exhibited a fearful rubicundity, the effects of stooping near a large fire. The perspiration ran down his cheeks, forming furrows in the white powder that yielded to the large drops which fell from his forehead, where a thick paste began to appear. Still he relaxed not in the ardour of his chase, but persisted in running after the dog like



a madman. Presently, a high pailing arrested his course; Azor had managed to creep between the bars, and was already in the midst of the adjoining field, when Champignon was seated on the top of the fence, hesitating whether he should descend with a leap, as the ground was much lower on the other side. While he was in this ridiculous posture, at one moment examining the green sod beneath, at another casting a searching glance in the direction which the dog had taken, and brandishing his soup-ladle as if it were some martial weapon, the *garde-champetre*\* came up, and catching him by the leg, inquired what he was doing?

"Nothing," answered Champignon: "except looking after a marrow-bone," he added slowly.

"The boundary between two people's property is a singular place to look after a marrow-bone," returned the *garde-champetre*.

"It is as I tell you," said the gastronome; but no sooner had he uttered these words than he lost his balance, fell backwards into the enclosure, which was attached to the property of Louis Dorval, and knocked off the *garde-champetre's* cocked hat with his foot as he rolled over. At the same moment, Azor, who had discussed the bone, and was returning home to his kennel, cantered slowly towards the railing. Perceiving the cocked hat rolling on the ground, before its owner could stoop to pick it up, the playful animal seized it in his mouth, and scampered once more across the fields, wagging his tail, and performing a thousand gambols to exemplify his delight, while the discomfited authority was obliged to run after the mischievous dog, venting his wrath in curses against Champignon, the hat, the pailings, and Azor. In the meantime, the gastronome raised himself from his fallen position, muttered something about "a series of accidents always happening to the best cook

\* A species of police-officer or *gendarme*, entrusted with the maintenance of order in the country.



in Europe," and regained the dairy, or kitchen, to complete the breakfast.

A sudden idea had struck De Rosann, that it would be indecent and impolitic in him to suffer Belle-Rose and Champignon to sit down at the morning's repast with Eloise and her mother. He communicated his thoughts to Mr. Clayton, and proposed to breakfast alone with those two individuals, to prevent any unpleasant feeling or remark on the part of Mrs. Clayton. This plan was greatly approved of, and therefore adopted, the brother-in-law taking upon himself the difficult task of reconciling Eloise to the absence of her lover.

No sooner was this arrangement completed than Champignon made his appearance with a number of dishes, which he placed upon a table, in the open air, opposite the barn. De Rosann and Mr. Clayton then separated, agreeing to see each other once more before they left the premises for St. Malo. The former bent his steps towards the dairy, where Belle-Rose anxiously awaited him; and the latter sought his sister-in-law and niece to conduct them to the repast, so exquisitely cooked, and gallantly spread by the comical figure in the white night-cap.

"It appears you are acquainted with the gentleman and two ladies who arrived in the carriage," said Belle-Rose, when De Rosann entered the place which Champignon had converted into a kitchen.

"Yes, slightly," replied Alfred. "But that will not make me alter my plans, nor separate from you till we arrive in Paris."

"*Tant mieux*," said Belle-Rose: "I am not yet wearied of your company, although I have sense enough to know, De Rosann, that my society cannot always suit you; and that if you ever rise in the world, our friendship is at an end."

"You wrong me, Belle-Rose, I declare upon my honour," returned De Rosann. "It is true that your pursuits and mine are somewhat at variance with each other; but I shall not easily forget the obligations I



am under to you. Had it not been for your aid and advice, I should perhaps have starved, or been recaptured immediately after my flight from Brest: indeed, I do not know that I should have had the courage to attempt an escape."

"Say as little about that as possible, De Rosann; and let us commence an attack on some of the messes which Champignon has dished up. But perhaps you breakfast with your friends?"

"We have eaten together, hitherto, Belle-Rose; wherefore should we then take our meals apart now?" returned Alfred.

"Cursed marrow-bone!" cried Champignon, who entered at the moment; "it would have made so delicate an addition to the repast!"

"We are doing honour to your viands, my worthy Apicius," exclaimed Belle-Rose, helping himself to a plentiful supply of hashed turkey.

"I reserved the dish for you, master Mercury," retorted the gastronomer, who had somewhere read or heard that the winged messenger of Jupiter was the patron of thieves and vagabonds.

"You will, of course, partake of the dainties which you yourself have arranged?" said De Rosann; but before the last syllable had fairly left his lips, Champignon was already seated at the table, and playing a vigorous game with his fork.

After breakfast, De Rosann left his companions for a moment, to pay his respects to Mrs. Clayton. The reception he experienced was cold and chilling in the extreme: he, however, affected not to perceive it, but with the natural ease of a polished Frenchman, informed himself of her health, made a few indifferent remarks relative to the weather, *et cetera*, and then arose to say adieu. The lovers exchanged tender and expressive glances. Mrs. Clayton condescended so far as "to wish Monsieur De Rosann well;" and her brother-in-law said boldly, "Do not forget to write from Paris, my dear Alfred, and tell me how the world



uses you; for God knows that destiny has lately reserved some sad vicissitudes to try your patience."

"Be assured of my punctuality as a correspondent," replied the youth, pressing with fervour the hand which was held out to him.

"And rely upon my friendship for ever," exclaimed Mr. Clayton, placing a peculiar emphasis upon his words.

"My stay at St. Malo will be so short," observed De Rosann, "that I shall not have the pleasure of seeing you again."

"What! do you intend to leave immediately after you set foot into the town?" cried the worthy uncle, as if the plans adopted by De Rosann were not already known to him.

"I shall take my place in the *diligence*, or the *malle-poste*,\* this very evening," was the answer. "But I will not trespass any longer upon your time, *Madame*," he added, turning to Mrs. Clayton, and bowing profoundly, without venturing to offer his hand. "I wish you a pleasant journey, ladies. Adieu, my dear Sir."

And De Rosann retired, having cast a single glance at Eloise, to assure the trembling girl of his constant love. The purport of that glance was not misunderstood: lovers have a language ten thousand times more expressive than the mere syllables which flow from the lips, and which are cooled by the breath ere they vibrate on the ear; but the language of the eyes is replete with fire!

When De Rosann rejoined Belle-Rose, Champignon was not for the moment in the dairy. A consultation accordingly arose on the expediency of taking the worthy gastronomer with them, or the necessity of leaving him behind.

"I have obtained a small supply of money from my friend," said De Rosann, without mentioning any name; "and can easily give the poor fellow the wherewith to sustain himself for a certain time. Besides,

\* The mail.



he has a cousin or an uncle at St. Malo; and his culinary talents will always provide him with the means of subsistence. If you concur in my opinion, I will speak to him myself, and we shall continue to travel alone together, as before."

"Be it so," returned Belle-Rose, "and use despatch; for we must soon think of resuming our march."

De Rosann accordingly sought Champignon in the vicinity of the dairy; and at length found him holding forth to Louis Dorval—whom he retained by the button-hole—on the excellencies of *cotelettes à la quadrille*. The poor farmer understood but one-half of the rhodomontade uttered by Champignon, and was unable to conceal his delight when the appearance of De Rosann put an end to the lecture; for the gastronomer, oblivious in the heat of argument that his hands were covered with flour, had imprinted various white marks on the coat and waistcoat of his unwilling pupil, who did not dare exhibit the slightest impatience or ill-humour, being totally ignorant as to what degree of intimacy the self-dubbed cook might claim with an individual that had given proofs of an unbounded munificence towards himself.

De Rosann drew Champignon aside; explained to him, in a few words, that he and Belle-Rose had certain reasons for being desirous of travelling alone; and placed a bill for five hundred francs in his hand. The *ex-restaurateur* opened his eyes with the most stupid astonishment at this instance of generosity on the part of one whom he had only known for a short time, and endeavoured to mutter a sentence expressive of his gratitude; but, failing in the attempt, he pulled off his night-cap, made a respectful bow, and stood staring like an owl on his benefactor; till at length De Rosann was obliged to turn away, to avoid bursting out into a violent fit of laughter. Champignon followed our hero to the dairy, and wished both him and Belle-Rose a prosperous journey, with tears in his eyes, adding, "that the next time they met, he hoped to have the pleasure of cooking them a dish of his newly-invented cutlets."



## CHAPTER II.

## THE MYSTERIOUS PAPERS.

ARRIVED at St. Malo, De Rosann and Belle-Rose bent their steps towards an inn of second-rate repute—it not being more usual in France than it is in England for foot-passengers to seek the principal hotels. The landlord was a civil and obliging man, and willingly charged himself with the task of obtaining the necessary signatures to his guests' passports at the town-hall. De Rosann then despatched a *commissionnaire* or porter to procure cash for his bills on the merchant's house which Mr. Clayton had indicated ; while Belle-Rose indulged in the refreshing luxury of a bath, where he amused himself with a bowl of rich soup called *consommee*.\*

The reader may readily suppose that Alfred was dying with curiosity once more to examine the mysterious papers of which he had lately become possessed in so miraculous a manner ; and the longer he was deprived of a proper opportunity, the greater became his impatience to investigate their contents—a proceeding to which he had entirely reconciled his conscience, by means of the following arguments.

“If,” said he to himself, “I preserve these documents untouched till I have an opportunity of advertising them in the public journals, or of making inquiries in the metropolis and principal towns of France, relative to the existence of an heir to the name and estates of the late Marquis of Denneville, I may keep them for years in my possession, and then eventually have done no good. If I read them, they may probably furnish me with some clue to discover whether there be a living scion of the ancient family,

\* A common custom in France.



or whether the race of Denneville be entirely extinct. It is therefore my duty to take cognizance of papers which the hand of Providence has apparently thrown in my way ; and I will act according to their contents.”

These just and proper reflections, decided our hero to peruse the documents in question ; and when the porter returned, with notes of the bank of France for a thousand francs each, in lieu of the effects that had been placed in his hands, De Rosann desired to be shown to a bed-room, under pretence of taking an hour's repose ; and having carefully locked the door, he seated himself at a table, on which he spread the mysterious papers. We have before stated that they were letters, and that many had escaped the attacks of vermin and the ravages of time. De Rosann sought for the one that bore the oldest date, so as to read them in a proper order ; and applied himself attentively to its examination. But scarcely had his eyes run over the first ten words, when he uttered an exclamation of astonishment, and struck his forehead forcibly with his hand, as if in doubt whether he were awake or dreaming. He then appeared to ruminate for a few minutes ere he continued the perusal of a document which had thus created his wonder. At length he started from his reverie, drew the letters near him once more, and hastened to accomplish his task.

As his eyes ran over each successive line, his attention became more deeply rivetted to the papers, and his interest more essentially excited. At one moment a partial gloom would pervade his features ; at another a joyous ray illuminated his countenance. He seemed the victim of mingled hope and fear, joy and sorrow, anticipation and dread. Letter after letter was consecutively scanned and laid aside—not a word had escaped his scrutiny ; and only one epistle remained unread. His anxiety now appeared worked up to an extraordinary pitch ; for some moments he almost hesitated whether to conclude his task, or



relinquish it for ever, so violently was his bosom a prey to the wildest excesses of expectation and alarm. At length he recalled his departed energy—nerved himself to bear the result, whatever it might be—and cast his eyes in an instant of desperate courage on the only letter that was still to be perused. Suddenly his visage brightened—a triumphant smile played upon his countenance—his glances were replete with delight—he involuntarily clapped his hands together—started from his chair, and cried out “Thank God—thank God! the hand of heaven is indeed evident in this miraculous event!”

For many minutes he forgot his real situation—he did not recollect where he was—he seemed involved in an ecstasy even greater than that into which Jeannette’s song had thrown him three days before. His mind was occupied by new ideas—fresh hopes were awakened in his breast—and he pictured to himself a smiling future as he paced the room with uneven steps. His delirium of joy resembled the effects of an extraordinary dose of opium on a somnambulist. He rubbed his hands together, laughed incoherently, and cast wild glances around him. His spirit appeared to be wound up to such a degree as to threaten most dismal consequences in case of a too sudden reaction. Fortunately, however, his eye caught sight of the papers scattered upon the table, and he recovered his natural equanimity in a moment.

Having carefully folded the precious documents, and placed them about his person as before, he unlocked the door of the bed-chamber, and rang the bell. The landlord himself appeared to answer the summons.

“Have you succeeded in obtaining the fulfilment of the necessary formalities to our passports?” inquired De Rosann.

“Most unquestionably,” returned the landlord.

“But I have changed my mind,” cried Alfred. “Circumstances will oblige me to go to England as speedily as possible.”



"Actually!" exclaimed the landlord.

"Therefore have the goodness to inform me whether there be a steamboat from hence to Dover; and if so, when it starts."

"Apparently, there is no steam-vessel between this port and Dover; and, consequently, you must proceed to Havre-de-Grace, where, invariably, there are ships of all descriptions, bound usually for a place generally called Southampton."

"Have you such a thing as a post-chaise?" asked De Rosann.

"Indubitably," was the reply.

"Which means *yes*, I suppose," cried Alfred pettishly; for he was wearied of the extraordinary profusion of adverbs adopted by the landlord, and the *maladroit* manner in which they were placed amongst the other words that formed the sentences he uttered.

"Unquestionably," answered the host, with the most imperturbable gravity.

"In that case I will trouble you to order the horses."

"Immediately?" asked the landlord.

"In about an hour," returned Alfred, now for the first time recollecting that he had not yet communicated his intention to Belle-Rose, whom he could scarcely leave in so abrupt a manner.

"Voluntarily! But your companion, *Monsieur*, has prudently ordered a luxuriantly sumptuous dinner to be served up incontinently; and if I might adventurously offer a piece of advice, I should energetically counsel *Monsieur* not to expose himself inconsiderately to the cold air without having preparatively fortified his stomach."

"You are right, my worthy host," replied De Rosann, after a moment's consideration; "I will depart after dinner."

"Excellently arranged, admirably thought of, and judiciously contrived!" ejaculated the landlord, as he left the apartment with a low bow.

"There is a man who would fain pass himself off for



a pedant," thought De Rosann in his own mind, when he was once more alone; "and all he succeeds in doing is to make himself appear a consummate ass. But let me now seek Belle-Rose, and communicate my intentions of proceeding to England, instead of accompanying him to Paris. Leblond—the police—the secret service—and everything must give way to the important mission with which chance or destiny has charged me."

Belle-Rose was reclining on a sofa, in a handsome parlour of the inn, perusing one of Pigault Le Brun's novels, or rather dosing over it, when our hero entered.

"My dear Belle-Rose," said Alfred, somewhat embarrassed, for he was afraid his precipitate conduct might appear strange, or be badly interpreted, particularly as it was impossible to reveal the real causes of so sudden a change in his plans; "my dear Belle-Rose, I shall not be able to accompany you to Paris; I have made up my mind to go to England."

"And wherefore?" asked Pierre, raising himself on one arm from the sofa.

"I am afraid of being recaptured; and I have such a horror of the galleys," returned De Rosann, inwardly ashamed of so paltry an evasion.

"Well, if you be determined, I shall not oppose your wishes," said Belle-Rose. "But when do you intend to embark?"

"I am going to Havre this very afternoon—"

"I will accompany you thither, if you have no objection," interrupted Belle-Rose, after a moment's thought; "and when I have seen you safely on board the packet, I shall step into the diligence, and return to my favourite city, Paris."

"So far from entertaining the slightest repugnance, I shall be delighted with your society *as far as Havre*," said Alfred, laying a particular stress upon the four last words.

Belle-Rose did not appear to notice that peculiar emphasis, nor did he endeavour to dissuade our hero



from his purposes, but endeavoured to change the conversation. As it wanted at least two hours till dinner-time, they took advantage of the interval, and walked out into the town to purchase a few necessaries for their journey. Belle-Rose himself volunteered to buy a couple of trunks or portmanteaus, and entered a shop for that purpose, while De Rosann remained in the street, reading a large bill which was posted against a wall, and which gave him information relative to the hours of arrival and departure of the steam-packets which traversed the ocean between Havre and Southampton.

On their return to the hotel, the landlord informed our hero and his companion, "That the cook had exquisitely attended to their orders, that the market had bountifully supplied the larder, and that they might confidently rely upon instantaneously being served with an unexceptionably toothsome repast."

"The trunk-maker adjoining will presently send two small portmanteaus to the inn," said Belle-Rose, addressing the host; "will you have the goodness to convey one to each of our chambers?"

"Infallibly," answered the landlord, opening the parlour door for his waiter, who appeared at the moment with the dinner.

A Frenchman is naturally of a gay and lively disposition. Instead of the sober, phlegmatic, and even temperament of the Englishman, he has either an unbridled flow of spirits, or a deep depression. But the former generally prevails; and when he is *en train de faire mille folies*,\* there is not a happier being in the world. His eyes sparkle with a peculiar vivacity; his conversation, though light and superficial, is replete with natural wit, and he feels himself independent of the world.

Such was now the case with De Rosann. He felt

\* Literally, "In the humour to commit a thousand follies." The expression is synonymous with "up to anything," or "ready for all kinds of fun."



certain of being able to elude the vigilance of the Gendarmes, armed as he was with a passport, in which the most scrupulous could not detect a single flaw. He was about to visit another land, of whose glories, whose power, and whose resources he had heard so much, and it was a pleasant task that impelled him thither. He had seen Eloise—he had renewed with her, in the presence of Mr. Clayton, all their former vows. He was possessed of that gentleman's friendship; and he had good reason to hope that eventual success would crown all his fondest wishes. Belle-Rose carelessly questioned him as to the cause of his sudden gaiety, and was apparently satisfied with a trivial excuse, which to the meanest capacity would have seemed a prevarication; but he affected not to notice the blush that betrayed his friend's momentary embarrassment, and continued to sip his Volnay with a *connoisseur's* relish.

When dinner was over, De Rosann retired to his chamber, to arrange the various articles which he had purchased in the morning. A small portmanteau of black leather stood upon a chair, ready to receive the objects its owner might think it fit to be entrusted with, amongst which were the mysterious documents that had apparently worked so happy a change in his spirits.

Our hero's occupation was scarcely concluded, when Belle-Rose, accompanied by the porter of the hotel, entered the room; and having inquired of De Rosann if his portmanteau were ready, on receiving an answer in the affirmative, he desired the man to carry it down stairs, and lash it to the post-chaise. His orders were immediately obeyed, the bill was liberally settled, and the two travellers stepped into the carriage, which rolled away from the hotel as speedily as four horses could draw it, while the landlord declared, "That perceptibly those gentlemen were indisputably the most worthy guests he had accidentally seen during the last six months; and that he cordially hoped they would safely arrive at the end of their



journey as satisfactorily as they had apparently undertaken it."

Nothing of any consequence ensued on the road from St. Malo to Havre-de-Grace. Belle-Rose himself saw the baggage carefully unpacked and conveyed to their respective apartments, and settled with the postilion of the last stage.

To be brief, the hour of departure arrived. Belle-Rose had taken his place in the *malle-poste* for the evening of the day on which De Rosann was to bid a short farewell to France; and he accompanied our hero as far as the quay, where the steam-vessel was lying. De Rosann had already insisted upon Belle-Rose accepting a quarter of the sum with which Mr. Clayton had supplied him; and having repeatedly thanked the companion of his flight for the services he had derived from his knowledge of the country and friendly guidance, Alfred stepped into the packet-boat, and was soon out of sight of the spires of Havre, the French coast, and the land which contained all that was dear to him upon earth.

For some time De Rosann walked up and down the deck without taking the slightest notice of a soul. The sea was tolerably calm—a gentle breeze blew favourably from the south-eastern quarter, and the gallant vessel ploughed the blue element "like a thing of life," dashing away the white foam from her prow as if she triumphed over the watery waste, and could control the billows, as she defied the influence of the tide. At length, De Rosann became wearied of his own reflections, and looked around him to seek a variety. On his right hand was a middle-aged Englishman of genteel appearance, good-humoured countenance, and easy manners. He, moreover, spoke French uncommonly well, and addressed De Rosann in that language.

"You are upon your way to England, Monsieur, for the same purpose, I presume, that originally led me to France—unless, indeed, you have been thither before."



"This is the first time," answered De Rosann; "but business as well as pleasure, have induced me to undertake this voyage."

"Of course, you will proceed to London," said the Englishman.

"My affairs lie in that city; and even if they did not, curiosity alone would be a sufficient inducement to make me visit the metropolis of your country," returned our hero.

"You flatter my national pride," cried the Englishman; "and I dare assert, that if you have formed any idea of the splendour, the magnificence, and the extent of London, you will not be disappointed."

"Have you a Palais Royal in London?" inquired De Rosann.

"We have not a Palais Royal, it is true," answered the Englishman; "but our streets are large, and our shops are elegant—our bazaars are a combination of all that is costly and rare—our squares are numerous—our public edifices remarkable—our theatres extensive and handsome—our parks are open to the public, and our palaces well calculated for regal dwellings."

"I have heard," said De Rosann, "that it is only at the west-end where the streets are large and commodious, and that their width is carried to a ridiculous excess. I have, moreover, read a description of your public buildings, and they do not appear so numerous or remarkable as those in Paris."

"Wait till you see London," said the Englishman, somewhat sulkily.

"Oh!" cried De Rosann, smiling at the unworthy petulance of the other, "I only speak at present from what I have heard or read. London and Paris are doubtless the first cities in the world—and London is the larger of the two; but Paris abounds in more delights, in greater pleasures. We have *cafés*, *restaurants*, public baths, and news-rooms at every step. We have four times the number of theatres that London can boast of; and with regard to the luxuries of



life, I think you will agree with me in yielding the palm to the French kitchen."

"Yes," cried the Englishman, endeavouring to conceal his ill-humour in an affected facetiousness, "the French are superior to the English in their cooking and their dancing."

"And in their manners," added our hero, drily.

The Englishman muttered a "You be damned!" between his teeth, which did not, however, reach the ear of De Rosann, and passed over to the other side of the vessel, consoling himself with the idea of "Well, thank God, we beat them at Waterloo!"

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## CHAPTER III.

### DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND.

How beautiful is the ocean when its wide bosom is agitated by a gentle breeze, as the breast of a maiden heaves to the tale of her lover—when the sea-gull flaps its wing upon the crested billows as it skims them—when a few distant sails vary the dark blue of the horizon—and when the sky above is like a canopy of costly silk, whose fringes touch the expanse of waters on every side! How beautiful is the ocean when the rays of a summer sun illumine its surface—when the vessel dances gladly over the waves, dashing the white foam from its sharp prow—and when the heart of the passenger is so devoid of care as to enable him to enjoy the loveliness of the scene! O it is indeed a scene of magnificence—grandeur—and sublime terror!—a scene which creates such strange emotions of "pleasing pain" that we gladly fly to it again.

After an easy passage, the steam-vessel touched at Southampton; and De Rosann, preceded by a porter carrying his baggage, went direct to a hotel. He had



some difficulty to make himself understood ; but the proprietors and domestics of the various inns in the town were so accustomed to receive or attend upon French travellers, that they had generally imbibed a smattering of the language, or anticipated the wants of their transmarine guests, which answered the same purpose, even if it were not preferable on the score of saving many useless demands and explanatory signs.

Being shown to a bed-room, De Rosann prepared to change his linen and perform his ablutions ere he thought of anything else. But no one can conceive his rage and despair, when on opening his portmanteau he found that it was not his own. He stamped his feet, and clenched his fists, as if he were about to lay violent hands on himself ; large drops of perspiration ran off his forehead down his cheeks,—his countenance turned pale and red alternately twenty times in a minute,—and his pulse beat quickly to a feverish degree. Such is a Frenchman's anger ; or rather, such are his mingled wrath and sorrow—an extreme, like his felicity. De Rosann cursed his unlucky stars—dragged forth article after article from the fatal portmanteau, and only found more convincing proofs of the mistake, or intentional change, whichever it might be. While he was endeavouring to compose his disordered passions, to debate within himself on the best measures to be pursued in so terrible a dilemma, a morsel of paper, that had fallen from the box amongst other things, met his eyes. He hastily seized it ; 'twas a letter directed to himself : he tore it open, and read as follows :—

“ *Fin contre fin*,\* my dear De Rosann. Did you deem it possible to deceive Pierre Belle-Rose, whose Janus head and Argus glances may be matched in penetration against those of Vidocq himself ? Was it probable that your secret could escape me ? Oh ! De

\* Cunning against cunning,—diamond cut diamond.



Rosann, I always declared you were a fine gentleman, but a bad rogue.

“The noise you made in opening the cupboards of the haunted room at Louis Dorval’s old house awoke me. But I did not move ; I feigned sleep, and watched all your motions. The instant I saw the papers in your hands, I recollected François’ tale ; and I relied upon your honour, as a friend, to entrust me with the secret ; seeing that when men travel together, everything is in common between them,—an apophthegm I once whispered to a gentleman whom I eased of his watch in a crowd last summer on the Place de la Bastille.

“But you did not utter one word ; and I kept my counsel till the proper opportunity arrived. You read the document at the hotel in St. Malo ; and your subsequent gaiety, added to the sudden change in your determination relative to our journey to Paris, *et cetera*, betrayed the result of the perusal, and the favourable contents of the papers.

“Had you acted honourably, Alfred De Rosann, I should never have thought of outwitting you ; but, if we ever meet again, recollect that scarcely your own thoughts are concealed from an experienced personage like Pierre Belle-Rose. Towards a companion I myself invariably observe a straightforward conduct ; and I expect it in others, or else the hypocrite and the deceiver shall be themselves deceived.

“I merely scribble this to save you an useless journey to London, where—if you persist in going thither on a fool’s errand—we may haply meet. Adieu.”

This letter, which was without signature or date, fell from De Rosann’s hands as his eye glance over the last syllable ; and he threw himself upon a chair, overcome by the fermentation of inward passions, and the working of terrible emotions. He could not have fancied Belle-Rose capable of so much duplicity ; but, on reflection, he knew that, according to the loose ideas of self-appropriation professed by all adven-



turers living on their wits, his own conduct in concealing the papers must have appeared strange. He could now account for the coldness, and ready acquiescence, with which Belle-Rose heard his plan of leaving France and undertaking a journey to London. He remembered that Belle-Rose had himself insisted upon purchasing the two portmanteaus ; and made no doubt but that he had procured a couple exactly resembling each other. He called to mind his late companion's attention to the packing and unpacking of the baggage, and a thousand little circumstances hitherto unaccountable. But he could not help feeling an internal satisfaction when he said to himself, "Belle-Rose thinks he possesses documents that will immediately deliver a considerable sum of money into his hands : and he is mistaken. The biter is still bit. He may discover where it is, but he cannot touch one *centime* of the treasure."

And De Rosann rubbed his hands with delight as this idea flitted across his mind. But his joy was as evanescent as the noise occasioned by the whizzing arrow shot past us; for he again recollected, that perhaps those documents, through his carelessness, might be now for ever lost to the rightful heir, whom their contents would so essentially serve. Stung by this reflection, and aware of the urgent necessity there existed of communicating as speedily as possible with certain parties in London before Belle-Rose could have time to deceive them, he ordered a post-chaise, flung himself into it, and soon had reason to acknowledge that the rate of travelling in England was considerably superior to that of his own country.

Arrived in London, his first care was to inquire for the firm of Messieurs Robson and Co.; he fortunately recollected the name, but the address had escaped his memory. The banking-house was, however, well known ; and he hastened to Threadneedle-street as fast as a hackney-coach and a drunken driver could conduct him. The vehicle stopped opposite an extensive building, and De Rosann made his way, after



considerable difficulty, to the private office of the head partner. To his astonishment he found himself in the presence of the very Englishman whom he had offended on board the steam-vessel.

Mr. Robson—for he it was *in propria personâ*—received our hero with a cordial smile and an excess of politeness. He was probably ashamed of himself for his ungentlemanly petulance on a late occasion. Be that as it may, Mr. Robson was quite another person when enacting the part of the rich banker, than he was when travelling *incognito* on business.

“Ah! *Monsieur*,” he exclaimed, as De Rosann made a low bow, and stood a moment uncertain how to commence his business; “you have lost no more time on the road than myself; and to tell you the truth, I am not at all sorry your affairs have brought you to this house; my conscience assures me that I owe you an apology for a little abruptness which I unworthily manifested—”

“Not at all,” replied De Rosann, with the easiness of manner which was natural to him, and which most essentially increased Mr. Robson’s good humour; “I was sadly afraid of encountering in this office a gentleman unable to converse with me in my own tongue; and I assure you that I am most agreeably disappointed, by meeting one who speaks French so fluently.”

This compliment entirely won Mr. Robson’s heart in favour of our hero; and he offered De Rosann a pinch of snuff, with a gesture that bespoke a certain familiarity or intimacy which did not really yet exist between them. Alfred touched the box, and bowed politely.

“Mr. Robson,” said he, “I know that your time is precious, and I must not intrude too long upon your leisure. Will you permit me,” continued De Rosann, with a species of confidence which the open manners of the Englishman encouraged, or rather created, “to ask you a few questions concerning an affair of the utmost importance?”

“Certainly, *Monsieur*,—I have not the pleasure of being acquainted with your name,” cried the banker.



"De Rosann," replied our hero.

"De Rosann—De Rosann," muttered Mr. Robson: "that name is familiar to me. Ah! I recollect! Is it impertinent to inquire if you be any relation to the De Rosann of the Rue Caumartin, in the Chaussée d'Antin at Paris. I corresponded with the old man for some years; but shortly after his son succeeded to him in the business, my foreign transactions became so extensive that I was obliged to transfer the agency to a regular banker in the French metropolis."

"I am that same De Rosann who succeeded to your ancient correspondent," said our hero, convinced by the other's manner that he was a stranger to the failure of the firm of De Rosann and La Motte, as well as to the collateral circumstances attending it.

"Ah! then we are old acquaintances, in a certain way," cried Mr. Robson, with a complacent smile. "I am glad to see the son of an individual whose regularity in business was unparalleled," continued the talkative banker; "and should you have no better engagement for to-morrow, I shall be delighted if you will honour me with your company to dinner at six o'clock precisely."

De Rosann accepted the invitation, and the banker proceeded to say, "that as they had now indulged themselves in five minutes' conversation on indifferent affairs, he was ready to devote the same period to business."

"It must be upwards of thirty-three or thirty-four years ago," began De Rosann, resolved to enter briefly upon the subject, "that the Marquis de Denneville was in correspondence with your house."

De Rosann had no sooner uttered these words than Mr. Robson gave a sudden start, drew his chair closer to our hero, and prepared to listen with the greatest attention.

"And this same Marquis de Denneville," continued Alfred, "transferred, through his agent in Paris, a considerable sum of money to your charge."

"Perfectly correct," cried Mr. Robson; "I recol



lect that I had just been received into partnership by my father when the remittance was made to our hands."

"And the amount was eight hundred thousand francs—or—"

"Nearly thirty-two thousand pounds sterling," added the banker, without a moment's hesitation.

"Which have never been claimed," said De Rosann.

"That is to say, never directly claimed," cried Mr. Robson.

"Nor ever inquired after," rejoined our hero.

"Pardon me, *Monsieur*. By a singular coincidence, an individual has this morning been to the bank, and left word with one of my clerks, that he should call upon me in the course of the day to speak about the very affair that has apparently brought you hither."

"Thank God!" cried De Rosann, "there is no harm as yet done!"

"How—no harm?" exclaimed the banker.

"I will explain myself in two words," replied Alfred. "The individual who called upon you this morning has treacherously possessed himself of certain documents which point out the real heir to the Marquis de Denneville's fortune: and he has doubtless come over to England with the idea of claiming the money in your hands."

"And it was from you that the papers were stolen?"

"It was so," returned De Rosann.

"I comprehend," said Mr. Robson; and, after a moment's reflection, he added, "but of course I cannot surrender the money to any one save the real heir, who must substantiate his right beyond all doubt."

"That is everything I require," answered De Rosann; "and with regard to the papers—"

"If you can prove that they were surreptitiously obtained, I think I might undertake to restore them to the proper owner, or to yourself," said Mr. Rob-



son, "supposing the individual in question entrusts them to me, and when you produce your power of attorney, or authority to act for the parties to whom they belong."

"And should Belle—that is, the individual who retains those documents, hand them over to you in confidence?"

"We must take a lawyer's opinion, and go before a magistrate," returned Mr. Robson.

"I am afraid," objected De Rosann, "that the laws of England cannot take cognizance of a robbery committed in France."

"In this case, I am inclined to think, *our tribunals are competent*, as you say in your own country," cried Mr. Robson with a smile; "but, at all events, I am one of the principal actors in the whole play—because I retain possession of the cash; and be assured I shall stand your friend."

"By-the-bye, what name did the person in question leave with your clerk?" asked De Rosann, as he was about to quit the office.

"*Monsieur le Comte d'Elsigny*," returned the banker after a momentary reference to his book of addresses.

"Thank you," said De Rosann; and he wished the banker a good morning; but before he had gained the door, Mr. Robson caught him by the sleeve, and reminded him of his engagement for the next day.

When De Rosann returned to the hotel, which was the principal house of resort for all foreigners visiting the English metropolis, he found a letter, upon the table in his room, and instantly recognised the hand-writing of Belle-Rose. The contents ran as follows:—

"By accident we have both taken up our abode at the same inn: you arrived a couple of hours after me, and I saw you step out of the post-chaise that brought you hither. I have, therefore, resolved on choosing another lodging.



“Of course you intend to commence a desperate warfare with me relative to the papers. If it be your intention to divulge all you know of my character, I shall naturally do the same good office towards you: but if it suit you to forget the circumstances under which we first met, and to fight, upon fair ground, with any weapons save those of scandal, I am willing to make the compact; for it will not forward either of our purposes to let the world know we are two fugitive galley-slaves.

“Should this mutual concession obtain your approbation, I shall soon discover your assent by your actions. Therefore rest assured that the secret is safe with me until your lips have divulged it to my disgrace; and then the shame will be equally shared. It suits me to take another name; the suppression of your knowledge of that change enters into our compact as well as any other circumstance unconnected with the papers: but of course I do not suppose you will allow the limits of our agreement to comprehend the stratagem by which I obtained possession of the said documents. You see I am willing to act justly; and, that I anticipate your slightest objection to the conditions of our treaty. *Encore fin contre fin.*”

The contents of this letter did not at all displease our hero, as the reader may well imagine: and he was not afraid that Belle-Rose, or the Count d'El-signy, would break an agreement that involved his own honour as deeply as that of his adversary. But while he made this reflection, he could not help smiling at the easy and off-hand manner in which his late companion, or guide, penned the epistles that conveyed his thoughts, exactly as he would have expressed them in conversation.

In the course of the day, De Rosann wrote a letter to Mr. Clayton, at St. Malo, stating that certain circumstances, which he could not explain until they met, had obliged him to hasten to London instead of returning to Paris, according to his former determination. He concluded with a long paragraph to his



beloved Eloise, wherein he assured her of the permanence of his affection, and of the sanguine hopes he entertained of being one day able to demand her hand in marriage of her mother. He besought her not to despair, but to keep up her spirits to the utmost of her power, and refrain, as much as possible, from tormenting Mrs. Clayton with supplications that at present were vain, as he was almost certain of speedily removing every obstacle to their union.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### MR. CLAYTON AND THE COOK.

WHEN once a subject of dispute arises in a family, and is not immediately settled by a firm decision, scarcely a day passes without witnessing a reference to the unpleasant topic. Mrs. Clayton was perpetually endeavouring to persuade her brother-in-law to forbear mentioning the name of De Rosann in the presence of his niece ; and he as invariably forgot, or wilfully transgressed, her injunctions. The object of all his comparisons, when he wished to cite an instance of a noble disposition, or an honourable-minded young man, was De Rosann : he never returned from his walk, but he was sure to have seen a person who strongly reminded him of De Rosann : the best dinner he ever had eaten in France, was at the *Rocher de Cancale* with De Rosann : he seldom failed to notice, at supper-time, that he wished he had some of the Madeira he was accustomed to drink when he passed the evening at De Rosann's house ; and as soon as his eye caught sight of the *Constitutionnel* and the *Journal des Debats*\* on the breakfast-table of a

\* The two leading French daily papers.



morning, he deplored the absence of De Rosann to discuss with him the proceedings of the ministers of the good King Charles the Tenth.

"I wonder you can be so obstinate, William," said Mrs. Clayton one day, when Eloise had left the room for a moment to retire to her bed-chamber, where she could sit and ponder on De Rosann without restraint, "as to persist in perpetually recalling to the memory of your niece a name which she ought to forget as soon as possible."

"And do you think, my dear sister," returned Mr. Clayton, "that the heart of Eloise is made of iron—that she can cease to remember one whom she tenderly loves, and on whose image she dotes more than ever—that she possesses superhuman powers over her passions—and that her chaste affection for a deserving young man can be eradicated as easily as the recollection of an every-day occurrence?"

"Time works extraordinary changes," said Mrs. Clayton.

"But there are feelings which no time can deaden—nothing less than the grave can overcome!" exclaimed Mr. Clayton solemnly.

"Not in so young a heart," persisted the deluded mother.

"You may perhaps discover your error when it is too late, madam," cried the irritated brother-in-law; "at all events, I shall have performed my duty towards a niece whom I love, and a friend whom I deem worthy of a connexion with us."

"Nothing on earth shall induce me to give my consent to so ineligible a match," said Mrs. Clayton, angry in her turn, "save on one condition,—and as that is an impossibility, or, at all events, a great improbability, my daughter stands but a small chance of becoming De Rosann's bride."

"Might I be acquainted with the nature of that condition?"

"'Tis scarcely worth mentioning," remarked the mother.



"Nay—I have a motive," urged Mr. Clayton.

"Let him, then, discover the particulars relative to my late father's disappearance—his real name, and rank in life—and the fate of the property he succeeded in realizing."

"Absurd!" cried the disappointed Mr. Clayton, who thought that some other condition was about to be proposed by his sister-in-law. "You know he never can discover those secrets which my father in vain sought to develop."

"Then let him renounce all hope of possessing my daughter!" returned Mrs. Clayton.

"I shall divide my fortune between her and De Rosann," said the uncle drily; "for I do not believe that if he did fulfil the harsh terms you impose, you would even then accord your consent."

"On my honour I would," exclaimed the mother, desirous of putting an end to this dispute.

"And I sincerely hope your honour may be put to the test."

Mrs. Clayton would have, perhaps, replied to this sarcasm, had not the musical voice of a songstress in the street fallen upon her ear at the moment, and rivetted her attention to the air with which a poor girl was delighting a crowd incapable of appreciating the merits of her harmony.

"'Tis a lovely air!" exclaimed Eloise, running into the room, and hastening to the window. "The *chanteuse* sings with some taste; and I am devotedly attached to those martial measures."

Eloise placed herself against the window in such a manner, that the searching glances of a curious multitude could not reach her, while the songstress essayed the following air in a voice naturally sweet and agreeable.

#### ORLANDO'S WAR SONG.

He's the pride of the land, and the subject of story,

The hills and the valleys re-echo his fame;

O then let his vassals sing praise to his glory,

And tremble, adoring their Roldan's dread name!



The demon of slaughter  
 Lent nerve to his hand,  
 When Erivain's water.  
 Roll'd red to the land ;  
 While the murmurs of wo, and the screams of the dying.  
 Were mixed with the agonized shouts of the flying.

Like the eagle that governs the regions of heaven,  
 Like the lion that widely extends his domain,  
 Meet praise and meet honours to Roldan are given,  
 Renowned in the dale, and beloved on the plain.  
 The subject of story,  
 The boast of the brave ;  
 The paladins' glory,  
 And mighty to save,  
 When the murmurs of wo, and the screams of the dying,  
 Are mixed with the agonized shouts of the flying.

Then march to the field—for the columns are wending,—  
 The brands are undrawn, and the sheaths are away ;  
 The Angel of Death to each army is sending  
 His pinions of slaughter—O haste to the fray !  
 The sun that is beaming,  
 High over their heads,  
 At eve shall be gleaming  
 On their lowly beds ;  
 For the murmurs of wo, and the screams of the dying,  
 Shall mix with the agonized shouts of the flying.

The banner of conquest with Roldan is waving,  
 His arm has well wielded the chivalrous brand ;  
 The foe is beneath him for clemency craving—  
 Orlando's the pride and the boast of the land.  
 When warriors are sounding  
 Alarms on the shield,  
 When chargers are bounding,  
 He's first in the field,  
 Where the murmurs of wo, and the screams of the dying,  
 Are mixed with the agonized shouts of the flying.

The song was concluded,—Eloise threw a few small pieces of money from the window,—the *chanteuse* looked up to express her gratitude with a glance, and passed on.

There is something peculiarly attractive in the martial or national airs of France. Their versification is good ; and in this point they are infinitely superior to



the English. But there is one fault—if fault it can be called—that is common to all : we mean their extreme length, which renders them tedious when sung in society. The most scrupulous critic, whose doubts as to the legitimacy of rhymes are numerous and severe, cannot quarrel with those of the French national songs, nor can his lynx eye detect the slightest error in their euphony and measures. This much cannot be said in favour of English airs of the same kind. Many of them are a compound of the most wretched nonsense, tacked together without the slightest regard to “rhyme or reason,” to agree with the notes of certain tunes. Let us merely quote, as an instance of the misery of their rhymes, “over us” and “glorious,” in *God save the King*. The memory of the reader can doubtless supply a thousand others.

But as these chapters are not written with a view to create elaborate comparisons between the respective merits of the manners, the institutions, or the literature of the two first nations in Europe, we shall relinquish our brief criticism, and continue the thread of our narrative.

Mr. Clayton was more annoyed than ever at the dispute which had just taken place between himself and his sister-in-law; and as soon as the *chanteuse* had concluded her song, he seized his hat, and ran out of the room to hide his vexation elsewhere. Now, the excellent uncle of our fair heroine was somewhat of a *gourmand* in his way: he loved the French dishes and the French cookery as dearly as could an Apicius or a Heliogabulus, without affecting the exquisite refinement of the former, or the delicate taste of the latter, whose usual food was peacock’s brains and sparrow’s tongues. As Mr. Clayton was walking down the street, directing his steps towards the quay, he was struck by the cleanly appearance of a new shop for the sale of comestibles, or *friandises*, which had only been opened that morning. A few loiterers were standing opposite the entrance, gazing on the *poulets truffés*, the *patés de foie gras*, the



*chevreuil*, and a variety of other dainties, spread in gorgeous array along the clean boards that slanted and projected on each side of the door. Mr. Clayton stopped for a moment, to regale himself with the odour of savoury meats that issued from the kitchen ; and seeing some game apparently suited to his taste, he entered the shop to purchase it. An individual, whose head was enveloped in a white night-cap, stepped forward, uttered an exclamation of delight, and seized the hand of his customer, who would as soon have found himself in the midst of Araby's hottest desert, as exposed to so friendly a welcome from one whom he speedily discovered to be the officious cook he had seen on the premises of Louis Dorval.

"Do you not recollect me?" shouted Champignon. "'Twas I that served up your breakfast a few days ago—"

"Yes—yes, my good friend—I think I call to mind—"

"O you need not think," cried the gastronome, at length induced to relinquish Mr. Clayton's hand; "for by enumerating the various dishes you partook of, I can speedily satisfy you as to the truth of my assertion."

"There's a man that does not choose to be misunderstood!" remarked one of the loiterers outside.

"I dare say *Monsieur Citron*" (for that was the name Champignon had adopted), "has recognised his friend or acquaintance *Cornichon*," said another : and a hearty laugh followed this execrable piece of wit.

Mr. Clayton's indignation, or rather confusion, knew no bounds. He was in an ill humour when he entered the shop ; the present scene did not help to cool his temper. Ashamed, however, to give vent to his wrath in public, he inquired the price of a brace of pheasants ; and Champignon hastened to describe the peculiar excellencies of a variety of dishes, having placed an exorbitant value on the birds which had originally attracted his present customer.



"Well—well!" cried Mr. Clayton, wearied of the gastronomer's explanations, and anxious to escape from the rude gaze of the loiterers at the door; "have the kindness to send them to my lodgings"—and he gave the address.

"The pheasants, and the other articles I recommended?" inquired Champignon.

"Yes—anything you choose," replied Mr. Clayton, scarcely comprehending a word that was said to him, so great was his confusion.

"O, but you must cast a single glance at my kitchen!" exclaimed the provoking Champignon, laying hold of his customer's arm, and endeavouring to pull him towards the entrance of the place he had mentioned.

"I will not give you the trouble."

"No trouble, I assure you; allow me to show you the way."

"My God, what a man!" cried Mr. Clayton, in agony; and disengaging his arm by a sudden motion, he made his escape from the shop, and took refuge in a neighbouring news-room for a couple of hours, fearful of meeting the sneering countenances of any of the individuals who had witnessed his unlucky encounter with Champignon. On his return home, he found Mrs. Clayton, his niece, and the cook, in grand consultation together, and overheard the voice of the servant, saying, "You may depend upon it, *Madame*, that *Monsieur* intends to regale a large party of friends."

"Indeed he does not, though!" exclaimed Mr. Clayton, stepping forward, and pushing open the kitchen door, in the vicinity of which he was standing.

"Then wherefore such a profusion of dishes?" asked Mrs. Clayton.

"There must be some mistake!" cried her brother-in-law, whose countenance betokened ill humour and perplexity.

"Oh! no—since the *friandeur* produced the address of the house written upon your own card."



“A short fat man, with a red nose, and a white night-cap,” added the servant; “he insisted upon tasting my soup, declared there was no tarragon in it, and when I remonstrated, the wretch replied, that ‘I must not contradict *the best cook in Europe.*’”

Mr. Clayton’s eye now fell for the first time on the kitchen dresser; and his astonishment was not a little excited by the objects that met his view. He instantly suspected the real truth, snatched the bill out of his sister-in-law’s hands, and when he saw it was receipted, uttered an emphatic oath, which we shall suppress for the sake of delicacy, and on account of our regard for the fair sex. Suffice it to say, Champignon had so amply supplied Mr. Clayton’s larder with all the most costly luxuries of the season, that there could not remain a doubt as to the whole family being provided for during the next fortnight. Mrs. Clayton had paid the *petit memoire*, which amounted to the moderate sum of four hundred and seventeen francs, because the bearer produced her brother-in-law’s card; and although she could not comprehend the reason of such an expensive outlay, she did not for an instant suspect the justice of the demand.

“This day’s work,” said Mr. Clayton, “will be a good lesson to me for the future, not to stroll into shops when I am in an ill humour.”

“If we were only thus regaled,” observed the amiable Eloise, “every time you are out of temper, my dear uncle, it would not be very often.”

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## CHAPTER V.

### THE DINNER-PARTY.

PRECISELY as the clock struck six, Alfred De Rosann was ushered into the drawing-room at the magnificent abode of Mr. Robson. An elderly lady and two young ones were seated with the banker before a



small fire, which had been lighted to give the apartment an air of cheerfulness, as the shutters were closed, and the lamps were already placed upon the table. Mr. Robson welcomed our hero with a frankness and cordiality which proved how religiously Belle-Rose had maintained the conditions of the compact to which De Rosann was disagreeably obliged by circumstances to assent. Alfred was then presented to Mrs. and the Misses Robson. He would gladly have sought an opportunity of questioning the banker alone for five minutes relative to that gentleman's interview and proceedings with Belle-Rose; but politeness, and the entrance of two other guests, obliged him to restrain his curiosity.

"M. Lebrun is invariably late," remarked Mr. Robson, consulting his watch, and manifesting the venial impatience of a host who is fearful that the dinner may be spoilt, or of a man of business whose appetite has been sharpened by an intense application to his affairs.

"Ah! do you expect Lebrun?" inquired a little gentleman with a vast appendage of gold seals to his watch-chain.

"The entertaining Frenchman that speaks broken English, and that I often meet at your house, Mr. Robson, do you mean?" asked the other visiter, whose nose was adorned with an immense pair of silver spectacles.

"The same," returned Mr. Robson.

"I heard a rumour upon 'Change to-day, relative to yourself and Lebrun," said he of the seals, addressing himself to Mr. Robson.

"Indeed! I wish he would make his appearance! But what did you hear, Mr. Goldsmith?" inquired the banker.

"That you and the Frenchman were about to form a partnership," was the reply.

"There is some truth in it," returned Mr. Robson: then seeing that De Rosann was unable to take a part in their conversation, he said to him in French, "I do



not know enough of your Bourse in Paris; but our 'Change is dreadfully scandalous. My friend on the right informs me he has already heard a report, that I am about to form a mercantile connexion with M. Lebrun,—a French gentleman whom I invited for the express purpose of meeting you—”

“I offer you a thousand thanks for such kind consideration,” cried De Rosann: “but does no member of your family speak my native language?”

“How silly I am!” exclaimed the banker, striking his hand upon his thigh, as if vexed with himself for not having thought of something before. “My younger daughter, Selina, is perfectly acquainted with French: do try her, and see if she has forgotten any of it.”

But before De Rosann had time to avail himself of Mr. Robson's hint, the drawing-room door was thrown open, and a domestic announced the arrival of M. Lebrun.

As if a basilisk had stung his hand, De Rosann gave a sudden start, and overturned the chair from which he had risen to be presented to M. Lebrun. No sooner had he set his eyes on the individual who bore that name, than he recognised a person he wished to meet before almost any other in the world. The recognition was mutual—so was the sudden start—for both were electrified, as it were, by the same machine. They then bowed coolly to each other, and seated themselves.

“Have you been long in London?” inquired Lebrun timidly.

“Two days,” answered our hero abruptly.

“You came direct from Paris? or have you been in any other country?” asked Lebrun, recovering a little assurance.

De Rosann gave no reply: his object was gained by the few words that had passed with his fellow-countryman. Lebrun was evidently ignorant of what had happened to him; that was all our hero required to know,



and, instead of encouraging the conversation of an individual whom he did not like, he turned to say a few words to Miss Selina Robson.

Dinner was presently announced ; and De Rosann offered his arm to Selina, whom he found to be unaffected and accomplished. Lebrun was accidentally seated opposite to him at the table ; but he carefully avoided encountering the glances of our hero.

" You are dull to-day, Lebrun," cried Mr. Robson, when an interval between the courses gave him an opportunity of remarking his guest's unusual taciturnity.

" A slight headache, my dear sir—'tis nothing."

" A glass of champagne will raise your drooping spirits," observed the banker, making a signal to the domestic to serve M. Lebrun with the delicious juice of Epernay's choicest grapes.

" M. Lebrun is doubtless fond of champagne," remarked De Rosann with an emphasis, the bitter irony of which was alone perceived by him whom it was intended to annoy.

" It is the finest production of my native country," muttered the crest-fallen Frenchman in a low voice.

" You certainly have experienced a loss to-day on 'Change," cried the gentleman who sported the silver spectacles, and whose name was Jenkins.

" There was a fall in the *four per cents*," said Mr. Robson ; " and I will wager heavily that my speculative friend has suffered by the reaction. Do you know, M. De Rosann," continued the banker, speaking in French, " that Lebrun is a desperate gambler in the funds ?"

" I can readily believe it," answered our hero drily, while M. Lebrun's colour went and came ten times alternately in a minute.

" And yet the world says we are about to sign agreements of partnership," added Mr. Robson, with a smile.

" Miss Selina, shall I have the pleasure of taking wine with you ?" said Lebrun, whose embarrassment



was increasing every moment, and whose confusion, at the last remark made by Mr. Robson, was palpable to all present.

“He does not wish it to be publicly known quite yet,” whispered the banker to the gentleman in spectacles : and the worthy Mr. Robson actually believed the truth of his own assertion.

The conversation now became more general, as the dessert had made its appearance. De Rosann was surprised at the removal of the table-cloth immediately before this last service ; and his wonder was not a little excited when he saw the ladies rise from their seats, and leave the room unattended by the gentlemen. His good sense, however, almost instantly assured him that this was one of the prevailing customs in England ; and he did not suffer any mark of astonishment to escape him.

“By-the-bye,” said Mr. Robson, when he had passed the decanters of port and sherry to his neighbour, “it is true that Williams, the stock-broker, has absconded.”

“Indeed !” cried he of the seals : “I heard a vague rumour of the affair this morning, but did not attach any importance to it.”

“Has he decamped with much property ?” inquired Mr. Jenkins, whom we might have dubbed knight of the silver barnacles.

“I fancy not,” answered the banker : and remarking that De Rosann did not discourse with Lebrun, he explained in French the subject of the present conversation.

“Such instances, I hope, are rare in this land,” said Alfred, with a bitter smile. “In France, the stock-brokers, as well as the lawyers and the notaries, are obliged to give ample security for the rectitude of their proceedings to the government ; and no man can become a stock-broker, without being able to prove that he possesses a certain property.”

“In that case public confidence is seldom violated,” observed Mr. Robson.



“Alas! how deeply is it to be deplored that the vices and immorality of mankind render such precautions necessary!” cried De Rosann. “No trust ought to be deemed more sacred than the private property of individuals. By a base flight with the treasures placed in your care, you involve the peace and prosperity of thousands: you reduce the widow and the orphan to a state of mendicity; you deprive the poor of their hard-earned savings, and the industrious of their honourably-acquired competency. So base a breach of all social and moral ties, frequently causes a thousand times more distress than the delinquent might have anticipated. In commercial speculations, there are so many connective links, so many wheels within wheels, that the ruin of one house may originate the fall of twenty. Credit is suspended—the good suffer for the evil—and the upright intentions of the just man are rendered liable to suspicion. As years succeed years, it daily becomes more difficult for an individual to obtain a loan, save on the most unexceptionable security. Need we look far for the causes of so universal a distrust?”

“Your remarks are as true as the gospel,” said Mr. Robson, who had listened with the greatest attention to the words of his guest: “and, as you assert, the virtuous invariably suffer for the vicious; the deeds of bad men render the actions of the conscientious doubtful: as luxury increases, so does crime.”

“And it is terrible to be deceived by one in whom you have placed confidence,” continued De Rosann, heedless of the banker’s observations, and raising his voice to its highest key. “Friendship becomes a coin with which a man endeavours to cheat his neighbour—affection—love—gratitude—are all sacrificed, in this age of corruption, on the altar of self-interest. But the day of retribution must come; the villain and the deceiver cannot long triumph in their turpitude; nor the hypocrite in his guile;—vengeance—justice—or the hand of Providence will assuredly overtake them in their wicked career. I knew a man who



entrusted all his affairs to a treacherous partner; this partner absconded with the property, and left the business of his confiding associate in a state of utter ruin. The scoundrel fled to another country—was hospitably received by a worthy and open-hearted father of a family—and then had the baseness to contemplate robbing his new benefactor. What do you think of conduct like this, gentlemen? and what would you say to the wretch who is capable of such damnable deeds? I need scarcely ask you. Well—I am the individual who placed his confidence so foolishly—that is the man,” proceeded De Rosann in a voice of thunder, as he pointed to Lebrun, “who absconded with my property—and you, Mr. Robson, are the hospitable parent he would even now deceive!”

“Is it possible!” cried the banker, his hand trembling, his cheek turning pale, and his pulse beating quickly.

“’Tis as I tell you,” answered Alfred in a lower tone: “the name of that villain is La Motte. Let him deny it if he can!”

“M. De Rosann—I am sure—you do not mean,” began the miserable wretch, endeavouring to pacify our hero’s wrath by means of a paltry excuse or apology.

“Depart—quit—leave this house directly—defile it no longer with your presence!” ejaculated Alfred, pointing towards the door. “Obey me, La Motte—or I shall not be able to master my indignation!”

The degraded Frenchman did not wait for a second bidding—he dreaded a more severe proof of De Rosann’s vindictive feelings against him, if he did not execute his command—and, without daring to raise his eyes towards a single soul, he sneaked out of the room like a malefactor detected in an infamous deed.

“I should have spared you this scene, my dear sir,” said Alfred, addressing himself to Mr. Robson, when the door had closed behind La Motte, “had not your intentions of forming a partnership with the villain who has just left us, been communicated to



me. I forebore to act thus summarily in the presence of your wife and daughters,—and I solicit your pardon for having taken upon myself the task of expelling that man from your society after I had made my accusation, to which his manners, his countenance, and his subsequent cowardice pleaded guilty.”

“My dear young friend,” cried the banker, rising from his seat and embracing our hero as if he had known him since the moment of his birth: “how deeply am I indebted to you for the important service you have just rendered me. Within ten days would that infamous scoundrel have been a partner in my bank; the deeds are already more than half completed at my lawyer’s office. O never can I forget this providential interference in my behalf!”

“I have acted as you would have done towards me,” returned De Rosann; “and I sincerely congratulate you on your narrow escape. In less than six months M. La Motte would have absconded to America with all your fortune.”

“I know it—I know it!” cried the banker, wiping away tears of joy from his eyes, and hugging our hero once more in his arms.

In the meantime, the gentlemen of the seals and the spectacles sate in mute astonishment, observing all that passed, but understanding nothing, for a reason which scarcely requires explanation.

“’Tis a part extracted from a French drama!” whispered Mr. Jenkins.

“To be sure,” returned the other, in the same *sotto voce*. “The young Frenchman is the heroine’s lover; Mr. Robson is her father, and Lebrun is a villain who has endeavoured to set him against the match, and to seduce the daughter.”

“I should not at all wonder,” said he of the barnacles. “See how naturally the young fellow performs his part. The father is convinced by his eloquence—the scandalizing mischief-maker dares not reply. Ah! he decamps—and just as if he were guilty, too!”



“And now the father falls upon the young lover’s neck, and embraces him. The heroine will be shortly introduced: I’ll lay a wager ’tis Selina. Well! this is an agreeable surprise! But when I reflect a moment, I think I have seen a translation or imitation of the piece at the Haymarket,” added Mr. Goldsmith.

“I am sure I have at the Adelphi,” returned Mr. Jenkins: and as Alfred and the banker had now ceased speaking, and had resumed their seats, the two gentlemen whose imaginations were so fertile, shouted “Bravo! bravo!” with all their might. They moreover clapped their hands so violently upon the table, that the glasses, plates, and knives, danced up and down with a terrible clatter. Mrs. Robson and her daughters caught the unnatural sound, as they were preparing thé tea and coffee in the drawing-room, and hastened to ascertain the meaning of it. This sudden appearance of the three ladies convinced their speculative visitors more than ever that the whole was a comedy got up for the occasion; and instead of ceasing their shouts and clapping, they continued to roar and to knock the table like a couple of mad men.

At length, after a great deal of difficulty, order was restored, and an explanation took place. Mr. Robson detailed all that had occurred, to the entire confusion of the two guests who had told each other such wilful untruths about their having seen a certain play at the Haymarket and Adelphi theatres. The whole party then retired to the *salon*, where the beverages concocted with the produce of Souchong and Mocha were served to the gentlemen.

It was very easy to perceive that De Rosann had suddenly become a great favourite with the whole family. Indeed, it was both natural and proper that he should be so; for he had rendered Mr. Robson a most important service—a service that had saved the confiding banker from certain ruin; consequently, a service that never could be forgotten. He ceased all in a moment to appear as a stranger among them,—he was converted, as it were by enchantment, into a



benefactor, a friend, an intimate acquaintance. Selina thanked him "for his handsome conduct" in the name of her mother and sister, as they were totally ignorant of the French language ; and she recounted to him, with a few innocent additions to increase its ludicrous aspect, the mistake made by Mr. Goldsmith and Mr. Jenkins. Alfred laughed till the tears ran down his cheeks ; but he expressed his sorrow that the worthy geniuses were not suffered to remain in their happy state of ignorance concerning the truth of the matter.

Before the hour of departure arrived, Mr. Robson drew De Rosann aside, and commenced a topic peculiarly interesting to our hero.

"I received a visit from the Count d'Elsigny yesterday afternoon," said he ; "but I suspect that he is about as much entitled to that rank as you or I."

"Perhaps so," remarked Alfred, without manifesting any signs of embarrassment, having made up his mind how to act relative to Belle-Rose.

"But that is immaterial," continued the banker : "the object of his visit is the essential point."

"Did he entrust you with the documents?" inquired De Rosann.

"You shall hear. He called upon me, according to appointment, and stated his business; of which I, of course, in the first instance affected a profound ignorance. Having furnished me with a verbal analysis of the contents of the documents he held in his possession, he desired to know whether I considered myself empowered to hand him over the property of the late Marquis de Denneville, upon his furnishing me with a receipt, or any other security of the kind which I might require. My reply was to the effect, that I must peruse the deeds before I could give an answer. He hesitated,—and by a subtle turn endeavoured to ascertain whether any person had lately applied to me concerning the same affair. I settled his skilfully managed interrogations by an evasion, and again requested him to entrust me with the papers



for four-and-twenty hours. To this he objected,—muttered something about considering the matter, and withdrew, telling me he should call in the course of three or four days, when he had consulted his legal adviser.”

“And in the meantime what is to be done?” asked Alfred, fearful that his most sanguine anticipations were destined to fall to the ground.

“Patience, my dear friend—patience !” cried the banker.

“Have you reflected that this Count d’Elsigny may leave the country, sell the papers with the chance of procuring anything through their agency to some Jew, or destroy them in a fit of disappointment and rage?” said our hero.

“I have considered the matter much more maturely than you think,” returned Mr. Robson ; “and the result of my deliberations makes me perfectly easy on all those points; because it stands to reason, my young friend, that the Count will visit me again, and that he will prefer entrusting me with the papers to resigning all hope of recovering a farthing at my hands.

“That is true,” said De Rosann : “and he may have postponed this visit for a few days in order to see how I shall act in the meantime ; for he knows that I am in London.”

“There is then a sufficient explanation of his conduct,” cried the banker, with a smile of satisfaction. “Do not be alarmed,—we will bring the rogue to reason; and I again repeat, let us have a little patience for the moment. Should your funds run low, and should you not choose to draw upon Paris, you know where to come for a supply ; I shall feel proud to be your banker as well as your friend.”

Alfred returned his most sincere thanks for this generous offer, the full extent of which he duly appreciated ; and having paid his respects to Mrs. and the Misses Robson, he withdrew to his hotel.



## CHAPTER VI.

## BELLE-ROSE.

MR. ROBSON prophesied truly. In a few days Belle-Rose—for we shall still continue to call him by his proper name—paid another visit to the banker, and inquired if he had thought any further upon the important question connected with the papers.

“I can only repeat my former words,” cried the man of business: “do you possess any document authorising you to receive the property of the late Marquis de Denneville, which is deposited in my hands, either as his heir or in behalf of his heirs?”

“No, I cannot say that I do,” answered Belle-Rose.

“Then how can you expect me to surrender into your hands a fortune, which, if unclaimed, necessarily devolves to me, like any other deposit forgotten, or unasked for?”

“I merely sought information,” cried Belle-Rose, somewhat embarrassed how to act; since he now saw very plainly that the papers in his hands would be productive of no extraordinary benefit to himself.

“Do you know the names of the real heirs, if you be not yourself the rightful owner of the money?” asked Mr. Robson, desirous of obtaining an insight into the views of the *soi-disant* Count.

“Their names I am acquainted with,” answered Belle-Rose, seeing that it was no use to disguise the real truth; “but their place of residence I am a stranger to.”

“Those papers, of course, mention the name,” persisted the banker.

“’Tis solely from that quarter my knowledge is obtained. The legal heir formerly resided in Lon-



don; years have however past since that person quitted this kingdom."

"And you know not where to find that person, M. le Comte?" said Robson.

"Candidly, I do not."

"By your own confession, then, it would appear you have no right even to those papers, much less to the fortune of the Marquis de Denneville," cried the banker in a severe tone.

"That is my affair," returned Belle-Rose, with his usual coolness and effrontery.

"I beg your pardon, M. d'Elsigny; but you will excuse me if I be somewhat inquisitive, because I am entrusted with a considerable sum, which I dare not resign to the first individual who steps forward to claim it."

"You have more claimants than one, I suppose," said Belle-Rose, smiling ironically.

"I will be as frank with you as you have been with me," replied Mr. Robson, seeing that the *soi-disant* Count might be induced to listen to reason, although he did not fear intimidation. "There are no claimants for this property, M. d'Elsigny; but there is a young gentleman, a fellow-countryman of your's, who is in communication with me on the subject. He has discovered the abode of the existing heir to the Marquis de Denneville; he possesses the authority of that heir to guarantee all he does in the business."—Mr. Robson did not think a little falsehood in such an emergency could be constructed into a crime of very flagrant dye—"and even without your papers he can soon find satisfactory evidence enough to ease my mind, and to induce me to give up the funds entrusted to my charge since the year 1796 or 1797."

"And the name of this young gentleman—this fellow-countryman of mine—is Alfred De Rosann," exclaimed Belle-Rose, considerably crest-fallen since the above explanation.

"The very same."



"If I had not been aware that he must have already informed you of the particulars of these papers' contents, I should not have answered your questions just now."

"I am perfectly convinced of the fact, M. d'Elsigny," returned the banker, assuming a coolness and an indifference in the affair, that threw even the wily Belle-Rose off his guard.

"Then my business with you is concluded," said Belle-Rose, after a momentary pause: and he moved towards the door, expecting the banker to retain him; but that gentleman wished him a civil "Good morning," and turning to his desk, as if to resume his labours. Belle-Rose was now entirely satisfied that the papers were not so absolutely necessary to the real heir as he had imagined; the wonderful presence of mind exhibited by Mr. Robson totally deceived the experienced adventurer, and he retraced his steps to the chair he had just left, determined "to make the best of a bad job," as the common expression has it.

"Mr. Robson," said he, "I am unwilling to do your young friend—I mean Alfred De Rosann—"

"You are right," interrupted the banker; "he *is* my friend."

"I do not wish to do him any harm, nor prejudice his views by retaining possession of these papers, since at all events they will facilitate the progress of the affair, and afford proofs so satisfactory that no doubt as to the claims of the real heir can exist; but De Rosann is indebted to me a sum of money; and however disadvantageously to myself he may have represented the manner in which I became possessed of the documents, he could not deny in my presence the fact that they were handed to me as security."

"Indeed!" said the banker, not choosing to contradict one word of all that the other might tell him.

"'Tis perfectly true, on my honour!" continued Belle-Rose, with the most unblushing effrontery. "Between ourselves, De Rosann has been rather wild; and as I entertained a considerable affection for the



young man, I mortgaged a part of my property—my own ancestral estate in Picardy, to relieve him from his embarrassments.”

“Most noble conduct!” cried Mr. Robson, with a serious countenance, as if he believed every syllable of this rhodomontade.

“And it is my intention to give him my younger sister in marriage, if he act honourably towards me,” continued Belle-Rose. “But at present I am rather pressed for ready cash ; and as I do not choose to encumber my estate in Picardy any farther—”

“Very natural!” exclaimed the banker, not a muscle of his face moving, nor the slightest smile curling his lip.

“You understand me, I perceive,” proceeded Belle-Rose: “I am not one of those gay young noblemen who squander away their property, as if estates and bank-notes were as plentiful as brick-bats in a kiln. Besides, my giddy days are over,—you and I, Mr. Robson, must not think of committing the follies that lead children into difficulties—we have wives—”

“Ah! M. d’Elsigny is married!” cried the banker, feigning astonishment at an assertion which he suspected to be as false as the preceding, and those that were to succeed.

“O yes—and blessed with a smiling family of eleven children,” answered Belle-Rose, with a bland smile. “The Countess was a rich heiress, of a noble and ancient family, descended in a direct line from the celebrated Roldan, who was killed by Bernardo, the Spanish warrior, at the battle of Roncésvalles—”

“I did not know Roldan left any offspring.”

“I fancy, between ourselves, that they were all bastards,” said Belle-Rose: “but be that as it may, my wife traces her lineage back to the good old paladin ; and we have still his helmet in my ancestral castle.”

“And at this minute you are somewhat in want of money, M. d’Elsigny?” cried Robson, fearful that his companion was about to amuse him with the history of the twelve peers of Charlemagne, and to connect



all the heroes of yore to the divers branches of his family.

"Exactly, Mr. Robson; to that point I should have come at last; because, whether I borrow some ready cash of you, and leave these documents as security, or whether I deposit them with my notary in Paris, and obtain the necessary funds, which are not very considerable, from him, it is the same to me."

"What is the amount you so generously advanced to my young friend, De Rosann?" inquired Mr. Robson.

"Twenty thousand francs," was the modest reply.

"I would not give half that money to possess your documents," said the banker in a decided tone of voice. "With four hundred pounds sterling I can terminate the whole affair; advertise to request the witnesses to come forward—pay the French lawyers' fees in Paris for collecting as many proofs as possible—remunerate the various agents employed in the business,—in fine, with half the sum you advanced to my young friend, I shall be able to arrange everything to my satisfaction. I speak as a banker, and as a man of business, M. le Comte: you must excuse me, but the security you offer is scarcely worth ten thousand francs to me, and nothing at all to any one else."

"And supposing,—merely a supposition, you know,"—said Belle-Rose, "that I offered to deposit these papers for that sum, should you be inclined to advance the money?"

"Why—I do not exactly know—there may be no objection: I have funds belonging to De Rosann in my hands; and he has given me *carte blanche* to act for him as I choose," mused the banker audibly.

"I lost a large sum last night, at play, to our ambassador, with whom I am very intimate; by-the-bye, I replaced him at Vienna for a short time, the year before last—"

"M. d'Elsigny is a diplomatist," said Mr. Robson.



“O yes; and a colonel in the army too,” answered Belle-Rose.

“In that case I cannot refuse you the little advance you require,” exclaimed the banker, suffering it to appear that the rank, titles, family, and numerous appointments of Belle-Rose, had originated this sudden resolution in his favour.

It was now that Mr. Robson made use of the *soi-disant* Count's own falsehoods as weapons against him.

“Of course, you have a good account open with your banker in Paris, Monsieur d'Elsigny.”

“O certainly; this accommodation is merely temporary.”

“I thought so: in that case you will be so kind as to sign an agreement, by which the documents become my own exclusive property, if you do not repay me within the space of one fortnight. This is merely a matter of form, you know; because your fortune and rank in life can always command ten thousand francs—it would be strange if you could not—eh! eh!”

“Thank God! the *chateau* d'Elsigny exists still!” cried Belle-Rose, “so e'en draw up your deeds as you choose; and instead of a fortnight, put ten days.”

“You act like a nobleman,” said Mr. Robson, with an imperturbable gravity which defied the slightest suspicion of its sincerity.

To be brief, the agreement was concocted according to the amendment of Belle-Rose—the four hundred pounds were counted down upon the table—and the documents were handed over to the banker. When Belle-Rose had placed the bank-notes in his pocket-book, and when Mr. Robson had satisfied himself by a reference to a memorandum De Rosann had given him, that the papers were correct, both in number and identity, he could no longer contain the mingled contempt and indignation which he had nursed during the last hour; but he burst forth in a strain as vehement, if not as eloquent, as that made



use of by De Rosann, when he exposed the villany of La Motte.

"Miserable wretch!" cried the banker; "I know not whether you be a Count or not, nor do I care: but one thing is very certain, that you are nothing more than an arrant swindler—an adventurer—a thief. Do you for one moment imagine that I believed an atom of your extravagant tales—your Rol-dans—your castles—your revenues—and your estates? Do you fancy I was blinded by your specious stories—your bounty towards De Rosann—your matrimonial speculations in his favour? Begone; and no longer sully this office with your presence!"

"If De Rosann have said one word to you—" commenced Belle-Rose.

"He has not uttered a sentence to your prejudice, save the damning fact of your having stolen the papers from him at Havre," cried the infuriate banker.

"'Tis all the same; I may as well inform you what kind of a person your friend De Rosann is," exclaimed Belle-Rose, coolly: and he was about to unfold all the disagreeable events in our hero's life, when Mr. Robson sprung forward, seized the wretch by the arm, and thrust him out of the office, anathematizing him as "a calumniator and a thief."

The discomfited Pierre did not think it worth while to trouble Mr. Robson any farther, but made his *exit* from the bank, muttering curses against the English, and exclamations of joy in the same breath, when he recollected the sum of money he now possessed. "After all," said he, "London is a miserable city, compared to my dear Paris: a cat cannot live by swindling in the former; and a whole menagerie of wild beasts may prey with impunity on the worthy citizens of the latter. If it were not so devilish convenient to be a Count in England, and so inconvenient—not to say ungentlemanly—to go to the galleys in France, I would return to Paris forthwith. As it is, let us try London a little longer."

With these words he cocked his hat on one side,



ran his fingers through the bunches of hair that stuck out beneath the brims, threw an extraordinary swagger into his gait, and turned into Birch's on Cornhill to take a bason of turtle soup, with a look of defiance at the industrious citizens whom he encountered in the shop.

He seated himself at a table opposite to a stout, demure-looking personage, whose blue coat and brass buttons, buff waistcoat, and drab small-clothes, betrayed the substantial tradesman at the first glance. Belle-Rose could not avoid a smile when his eye wandered over the staid tranquil being that was discussing some ox-tail with a certain relish, and was qualifying it through the *medium* of a glass of iced punch, while all his motions appeared rather the mechanically-forced efforts of an automaton, than the spontaneous activity of a living thing.

"Your soup, sir !" said a waiter to Belle-Rose : and although the self-dubbed count did not exactly comprehend the words of the domestic, a certain savory mess, now standing before him, recalled his attention from the singular figure opposite. But, no sooner had he applied the first spoonful to his lips, than the scalding heat of the turtle made him drop the spoon, expectorate the few drops he had taken, strike the table with his hand in a paroxysm of mingled agony and rage, and stamp his foot violently on that which he thought was the floor : it however fell with all its weight on the corns of the gentleman on the other side of the table, and caused that hitherto silent personage to give vent to so terrible a cry, that the waiters ran towards him with open mouths and staring eyes to ascertain the origin of his agony. Belle-Rose, whose pain was instantly forgotten when he heard the dismal yell, burst into a fit of laughter at the comical face of his neighbour. This only increased the wrath of him whose toes were so peculiarly sensitive ; and at length, unable to contain his indignation, he, in the veritable spirit of a true Englishman, raised a fist that might have floored an ox, and levelled



the diminutive Frenchman with the ground. Belle-Rose started up, his face purple, and his eyes flashing fire : but the timely interference of a policeman put an end to the warfare, and obliged the offending and the offended parties to follow him to the Mansion House, where the Lord Mayor was sitting at the moment on the magisterial bench, in order to dispatch a few cases of trivial consequence. The police-officer stated the position in which he discovered the two belligerents ; and the city-monarch proceeded to investigate the case.

“What is your name !” said he, addressing the Englishman.

“Daniel Higgins, please your lordship,” was the reply, accompanied by a respectful salutation.

“Well, then, Mr. Daniel Higgins,” continued the Lord Mayor, with an emphasis that created a general titter in the court, “you will be so kind as to state simply, and in as few words as possible, the origin of the dispute.”

“Why, your lordship,” answered Mr. Higgins, scratching his head, and winking his left eye, “I am a peaceable citizen, wot deals in the grocery-line, and I lives in Mark-lane. Having some business on Cornhill this morning, I sallies forth, and bends my way towards the place of rendi-woo (*rendezvous*) ; but as I was summat too early, and as Mister Michael Lobkins, the tanner, whom I expected to meet, wasn’t yet arrived, I says to myself, says I, ‘Let us go and take a bason of soup,’ says I, ‘at Birch’s ; cos vy, I always patronises the Cock, and this time we’ll give t’other a chance. Live and let live,’ says I. So with this here intention I goes to Birch’s, and orders a bason of hox-tail, which is my favourite beverage, with a little drop of hiced punch to wash it down. Now, my Lord Mayor, there ain’t a more quieter and tranquiller person in existence than your humble servant as is speaking : I seldom opens my mouth ; and when I does, my language is as concise as possible.”



“So I perceive,” said the magistrate drily.

“Then that’s positive proof, your lordship, since your lordship acknowledges it yourself,” cried Mr. Higgins with a species of triumph depicted on his countenance. “Well, as I was saying, I went into Birch’s, and sate down at a table jist as gravely as your lordship at the bench there, or an owl in an ivy bush. I had not been long engaged in discussing my hox-tail and sipping my punch, when I hears a gallows row at the door, and I sees that insinivating Frenchman, with his castor a one side, and his hair sticking out like a mop, enter the inner room with a hawful swagger. ‘Oh ! oh !’ says I to myself, says I, ‘here’s summat flash from Frogland:’ but I says nothing aloud, your lordship, although I takes notice of everything wot passes. So that there *Mounseer* bounces in, setting us all agog ; and he orders his soup, which was turtle ; and while the waiter was a-fetching it, he stares at me in the most himperant manner in the world, just as if my face was a bit more comical than your lordship’s, or any other poor ignorant creature in the world. I twigs my fine gentleman’s mincing looks and flagrant manner ; for I have heard speak of those confounded dancing-masters on t’other side of the water ; but I still preserves my gravity. Presently *Mounseer’s* soup arrives, and he forgets that it is steaming-hot ; so he claps a spoonful to his ugly mouth, and burns himself, as you might naturally suppose. Down drops the spoon—out he spits the soup—rap goes his hand on the table—and plump falls his foot on my corns. Now I don’t know whether your lordship be blessed with corns—but I has ’em in abundance ; and not being before-hand in an over good humour with our friend there, I was in a devil of a rage, particularly when he burst out into a horse-laugh, as if it were a devilish good joke. This irritated me confoundedly—and I doesn’t deny having lifted up my fist and knocked the Frenchman down as clean as a whistle. That’s the plain unwarnished



truth, your lordship—or may I be dam —— called a liar.”

When this plain and concise tale was brought to a conclusion, the Lord Mayor questioned Belle-Rose ; but finding that they could not understand each other, an interpreter was sent for, and through his agency, the following dialogue took place.

“What is your name?”

“Pierre Count d’Elsigny,” was the reply.

“Are you a refugee, on account of political matters, or are you a resident in England for your own pleasure?”

“I travel for my own pleasure.”

“Will you state the origin of the quarrel?” said the Lord Mayor in a conciliatory tone of voice, and with a politeness which he thought due to the other’s rank. The request was immediately interpreted, and acceded to.

“I entered a pastry-cook shop to take a bowl of soup, and, by mere chance, seated myself opposite to that individual,” answered Belle-Rose, pointing to Mr. Higgins, who lolled out his tongue and looked towards the crowd of spectators in the court, as if he were desirous of soliciting their peculiar attention to a language which he, in his ignorance, laughed at. “My soup was so hot that I burnt my mouth, and accidentally stamped upon my neighbour’s foot in an instant of pain. I do not deny that his ridiculous physiognomy brought a smile to my lips: but ere I could apologize for my awkwardness, he struck me a violent blow, which knocked me down: and the interference of the police-officer alone prevented me from returning it.”

“You are entirely in the wrong, Mr. Higgins,” said the Lord Mayor in a harsh tone, when he had examined the witnesses; “and if you do not satisfy this French nobleman by the most humble apology, I shall not only fine you for breaking the peace, but shall strongly recommend him to prosecute you for the assault.”



"Lord bless your worship!" exclaimed the chop-fallen grocer; "I'm sure if I'd known that such was the law, I would never have lifted up a finger, much less a fist against the Frenchman: but, I am as basely ignorant of the laws as your lordship, or any other fellow-creature."

"Do not make me the subject of your odious comparisons," cried the Lord Mayor; "but terminate this affair as speedily as you can, and let me never see your face in this office again."

"I thought the liberty of a British subject, who hates the French as he ought to do," remonstrated Mr. Higgins, "was as safe as a guinea in your lordship's pocket."

"Justice, sir, is the basis of liberty. And now, once more, I command you to solicit that gentleman's pardon, or it shall go hard with you."

"Pretty justice!" muttered Mr. Higgins between his teeth; then, calling the interpreter towards him, he said, "Will you have the goodness to explain to that snivelling Frenchman, that I heartily forgive him for the stamp on my corns, and I desire him to think no more about the rap on the head that I gave him in return; and you may say, if you like, that I'll shake hands with him, and stand a bottle of wine to drink the Lord Mayor's health."

The conciliatory portion of this apology was briefly explained to the *soi-disant* count, who thanked the Lord Mayor for his kindness, in having thus terminated the business, and withdrew from the court, saying to himself, as a complaisant smile animated his countenance, "Well! at all events, the English authorities pay more respect to aristocracy than the French. Decidedly I must try London a little longer." And having thus made up his mind to prolong his visit to the metropolis of England, he pulled his hat once more over his right ear, ran his fingers through his hair, and resumed his former swagger as he turned into the Poultry.



## CHAPTER VII.

SELINA ROBSON.

Nothing could exceed the joy of our hero, when, at the expiration of the ten days specified in the agreement between Mr. Robson and Belle-Rose, the documents were duly handed over to him by the worthy banker, who had taken such trouble to reserve them from the adventurer's grasp.

"'Twas a hard battle, my dear De Rosann: but I fought it courageously on your account. The rogue was as deep as a finished scoundrel well could be. As long as I live, I shall never forget his extravagant tales, which he told with such an air of sincerity, that a person less experienced than myself would certainly have believed them. I met him yesterday morning in the Strand, and he had the impertinence to make me a low bow. I did not, however, care to acknowledge it; and the fellow, nothing discouraged, cried out in a familiar manner, 'Ah! Robson—my boy—how are you?' he was hanging on the arm of another gentleman; and I heard him say as I passed by them, 'That is my banker—I am good for a thousand pounds with him, thank God!'—Did you ever hear such effrontery?"

"There is not a man in Europe more capable of suppressing a blush than he," said De Rosann. "But let us forget the Count d'Elsigny, and rejoice at the recovery of these precious deeds."

"You will shortly return to France, Alfred—and we shall lose the pleasure of your company. You know you are a mighty favourite at home—Mrs. Robson loves you as her own son—Mary declares you are the handsomest young man she ever saw—and Selina is equally ardent in her praises of your talents and literary acquirements."



"Flattery—pure flattery, my dear Mr. Robson!" cried De Rosann. "But let me answer your question about my return to France. Much as I am unwilling to resign, after so short and agreeable an acquaintance, the pleasure of passing my evenings with your amiable family, circumstances—urgent circumstances, connected with these papers—will oblige me to depart almost immediately."

"And what is the meaning of *immediately*?" inquired the banker with a smile. "To-day—to-morrow—or in a week?"

"The day after to-morrow: you know I promised to stay for Colonel Wentworth's—or rather Mrs. Wentworth's ball; and as you procured me the honour of their acquaintance and of the invitation, I would neither pay so bad a compliment to yourself, nor to your friends, as to disappear on the evening of the grand *fete*."

"Bravo!" exclaimed the banker. "And now, without any ceremony, my dear boy, you must make your *exit* from my office. Look at this pile of letters—not one opened yet—the clock has already struck twelve—and I must answer them all before sunset. So do leave me alone for the present, and pay your respects to the ladies in the drawing-room; it is not too early for a friend like yourself."

"I will avail myself of your permission," said De Rosann, "and communicate in person the certainty of my departure the day after to-morrow."

Selina was alone in the drawing-room when De Rosann entered. As he ascended the stairs, the sounds of her harp fell upon his ears: and they ceased the moment he touched the handle of the door.

"If I have intruded upon you at so unseemly an hour, Miss Robson, your father alone must bear the blame; for he it was who sent me hither—and with a particular purpose—"

"My father was aware that you would be well received, M. De Rosann," returned the young lady: "and may I know the particular purpose which has



procured me this unexpected pleasure?" she added playfully, and blushing, slightly, fearful of appearing imprudently familiar.

"To announce my speedy departure," answered Alfred.

"Your departure!" cried Selina, her countenance losing its vermilion tinge, and becoming deadly pale.

"Good God! you are ill—you are unwell, Miss Robson!" exclaimed De Rosann, noticing the death-like palor that overspread her features, and running forward to lead her to a chair.

"Thank you—it is nothing—a sudden pain—it is past," said the poor girl, casting down her eyes to conceal a confusion that was too evident, while her cheek and neck were once more suffused with a deep crimson dye. A pause of some minutes ensued—De Rosann felt uneasy; he knew not wherefore—and Selina could not suppress a sigh.

"You were practising when I intruded upon your privacy, Miss Robson," said De Rosann, at length breaking a silence which was equally disagreeable to himself and his companion. "Pray resume your music—and perhaps I might venture to solicit you to add the melody of a sweet voice to the harmony of your instrument."

"Excuse me this morning, M. De Rosann; I am not very well—a sick headache—an oppression of the spirits I cannot account for—have robbed me of all inclination to continue my amusement—"

"Even to oblige me," added Alfred in a tone of respectful familiarity which he had adopted since the evening of La Motte's exposure; for although that evening was the first he had ever passed in the society of Miss Selina Robson, the footing on which he stood with the parents entitled him to be considered in the light of something more than a common acquaintance.

"Nay—if you particularly desire me to return to my harp," began Selina, a partial confusion again appearing in her manner.



“Not for worlds, Miss Robson, if you be ill—and you really do *not* look well,” exclaimed De Rosann, gazing for a moment intently yet not rudely—because his glances betokened interest, and no gross passion—on the countenance of Selina.

She was pale, and a tear glistened in her eye: De Rosann thought she had never appeared so beautiful before. The fact was, that he had not till then thought of examining her features with attention. Her hair was brown—her eyes were hazel—her mouth small—and her facial line was cast in a Grecian mould. Her figure slender and well-formed; she had scarcely seen two-and-twenty summers—but her mind was even more accomplished and attractive than her person.

“And wherefore are you in such haste to leave us?” inquired Selina, after another pause, during which she endeavoured to compose herself so as once more to touch upon a subject that gave her pain.

“Urgent business, Miss Robson—”

“O it is always urgent business, or unexpected letters, that serve now-a-days for excuses,” interrupted Selina, with something bitter in the emphasis she laid upon her words, although a faint smile played upon her lips. “One no sooner becomes acquainted with people, than they run away.”

“Perhaps they occasionally do well,” said De Rosann, “to leave in time, ere the good impression they have created be obliterated or deadened by the faults a longer intercourse with them would expose to view.”

“You either wish me to pay you a compliment, or—”

“Or what?”

“Or to tell you to stay, at the risk of developing the dark side, as well as the bright side of your character.”

“Could you think me capable of such inordinate vanity, Miss Robson?” cried Alfred, as he inadvertently laid his hand upon her own. The touch was as



momentary and as evanescent as the flap of a bird's wing, or the reply of an echo to a single sound; but it brought a blush to Selina's countenance—a blush that scarcely failed to meet the eye of De Rosann. He did not apologize—but affected to be unaware that his hand had instantaneously encountered her's—and he acted prudently; for a solicitation of pardon would only have attached an importance to that which Selina should have regarded as a trifle.

“No—I do not think that vanity is one of the faults you intend to conceal by so precipitate a departure,” said Selina, endeavouring to maintain a cheerful tone of voice by assuming a gaiety in her conversation.

“Then you are certain that I have faults.”

“Now I shall accuse you of vanity,” returned Miss Robson. “But is it decided that you leave London the day after to-morrow?”

“Unalterably fixed: although others take advantage of the convenient words ‘urgent circumstances,’ ‘matters of vital importance,’ *et cetera*, to serve as their apologists, I have no need of dissimulation, because your father is acquainted with the important nature of my affairs.”

“Papa is really too tiresome!” cried Miss Robson: “he never tells us anything. I dare say he knew three or four days ago, of your intended departure.”

“No—indeed he did not—let me do him that justice. It is true he was aware of my determination to leave London as soon as I had perfected a weighty affair; but he was uncertain whether I should succeed until this morning. That is—we were both morally sure—though not absolutely.”

The entrance of Mrs. Robson and her elder daughter changed the conversation; and our hero shortly after took his leave. But as he returned slowly to the hotel where he lodged, his imagination gave way to a variety of conflicting ideas. He was not vain in reality—he did not venture to flatter himself, because he had a certain pride to offer up incense to—but he sus-



pected that his anticipated departure had awakened something more important than a momentary sorrow, or a common regret, in the mind of Selina. Her confusion—her repeated changes of colour—her refusal to resume her music—and the suddenness of her indisposition—all corroborated his supposition. It was true he had given her no reason to suppose that he was in the slightest degree captivated by her charms or her accomplishments. He had paid more attention to her than to her sister, or to any other young lady he had ever encountered at her father's house; because she alone could discourse with him in his own native language. But in all their conversations, he had scarcely ever paid her the usual compliments that a chivalrous spirit of gallantry invariably encourages when in the society of a young and pretty woman: he saw that her mind was too sensible and too much superior to the frivolities of life, to require the offerings of flattery; and literary subjects had invariably furnished them with topics. De Rosann was, therefore, quite innocent of any attempt to engage the affections of a heart whose love he could not return; and while he felt that no levity on his side had given Selina the slightest encouragement or hope, he could not help commiserating the luckless maiden from the bottom of his soul, and of breathing fervent prayers that he might be mistaken. At the same time he knew that Love is a tyrant, and not a slave—a master, and not a menial. It is the magic power whose enchantments can cast chains around the hearts of princes, potentates, and nobles—whose influence is universally felt, and seldom dared—and whose entrance into the human breast is as often effected by degrees as with precipitation. Love tames the pride of the warrior—makes the mighty monarch bow the knee—and visits the lordly palace or the humble cottage at will. Bolts—bars—walls—and ramparts, may keep at bay everything but Love!

When De Rosann returned to the hotel, he found two letters lying on his table. The first was from Mr.



Clayton. It was in answer to the one Alfred had written to him the day of his arrival in London; and it expressed the worthy uncle's surprise at so sudden a change in the youth's resolution of proceeding to Paris. It was, however, full of protestations of friendship, and of hope. Mr. Clayton said that Eloise was in good health, and desired to be most kindly remembered; and that if De Rosann did not soon return to France, he would allow her to write a few lines in his next letter. Our hero was overjoyed at these favourable tidings; and he almost forgot the second despatch, that lay unopened upon the table, in the wildness of his delight. At length his eye caught sight of the neglected epistle, the contents of which ran as follow:—

“I understand you have effected your escape, and that you are in London, despite of my injunctions to persuade you to return straight to this city. Fortunately your disobedience of orders which unseen powers spoke through the *medium* of my lips, has not as yet prejudiced you in the favour of your superiors and mine. But you must not desert the cause you have embarked in; you must be watchful and vigilant, awaiting the moment when your services will be required.

“These words may probably arouse your conjectures as to the nature of the service alluded to, and the means whereby you are to discover the arrival of the exact period at which you will be called upon to act. With regard to the former, I am myself unable to draw away the mystic veil that covers gigantic resources and designs: with regard to the latter, you must continually reside in Paris, and time itself will teach you how to act, and show what duties you are destined to perform.

“The authorities of the *Chancellerie*\* were dreadfully enraged at your escape from the galleys, because your sentence had been so indulgently commuted by the merciful disposition, as they expressed themselves,

\* The abode and offices of the Minister of Justice.



of the reigning monarch. A price has been set upon your capture; every town in France has received, or will shortly receive, the description of your person; and the Gendarmes will consequently be upon the alert. But you are protected by the all-seeing powers that commanded me to provide you with your passport, and to arrange with our agent, Plombier, for your flight: and most sincerely do I hope that you will eventually justify the expectations of those who deemed you worthy to be rescued from a lingering imprisonment. For, notwithstanding the severity of the measures which the Minister of Justice instituted against you, the moment your escape was reported at the *Chancellerie* — notwithstanding the reward set upon your capture, your pardon—full, unconditional pardon will be signed in a short time. The same hand that controls the signature of the Prefect of Police, can direct the pen of Charles the Tenth.

“You have already received sufficient proofs of the capabilities of the hitherto invisible powers whom you must eventually serve—you ought to be convinced that they are generous towards their adherents—then listen to the counsel of their agent, who speaks for them. Remain in England until you receive your pardon, signed and sealed by the royal hand; the delay may be a week—but it shall not exceed a month: then hasten to Paris, and inquire for me according to the instructions I gave you and Belle-Rose in the gaol at Verneuil. I await your reply; that I may know whether to inclose your pardon to London or not, as soon as it shall be obtained. Your obedience to the wishes of your benefactors is a condition of your receiving the promised indulgence.

“Your well-wisher,

“A. LEBLOND.

“*Rue de la Chanoinesse,*

“Paris, June, 1830.”

This letter troubled and pleased De Rosann at the same time. The hope of procuring a full pardon was



the most important object of his wishes next to the desire of possessing Eloise. He loved his native France as dearly and as enthusiastically as a William Wallace or a Tell could have adored, the one the Highlands of Scotland, the other the Canton of Uri ; and his heart leapt at the idea of being shortly able to tread his parent soil a free-man once again—unshackled by ignominious bonds—unaccused of damnable frauds—fearless of being recaptured and conducted to a goal. But, in order to obtain that unconditional pardon—in order to regain his forfeited rights as a citizen of France, and to return to its shores as the free-man he was desirous of becoming—he must succumb to a hard condition, and linger idly in a land which he did not love, and whence he was anxious to depart. He had visited England for the purpose of ascertaining if the property of the late Marquis de Denneville still remained at the disposition of an heir—and he not only felt it his duty to place the documents, which alone could recover that property, in the hands of their rightful owner, and thus secure to himself the pleasure of fulfilling a sacred trust reposed in him by something more than chance ; but he was anxious so to do for other reasons that savoured of an interested and selfish nature. It was true he could effect the same purpose by means of epistolary communication: but he had so fondly calculated upon being the bearer of such important tidings as the recovery of a considerable sum of money to a person who deemed it lost forever, that he would have shed tears to resign the joy he thus anticipated with such pure and fervent delight. And surely, after all the trouble and labour he had undergone in terminating the affair so promptly and so judiciously, the reward he promised himself cannot appear too exorbitant.

It was in vain that the perplexed mind of our hero sought to reason calmly on both sides of the question, and to arrive at some conclusion relative to the importance he ought to attach to Leblond's letter. If he waited to obtain his pardon, he would certainly



have a better claim on the indulgence of Mrs. Clayton, when he should implore her to forget the past—although he had no occasion to blush for his misfortunes—and should solicit her to receive him as a son-in-law. By remaining in London he was moreover certain of securing a continuation of that unsolicited favour which had already done him essential service, and which promised a permanence of its good feelings and protection towards him. He could, without materially offending against the laws of propriety and rigid honour, retain the documents in his possession a short time longer, and keep the heir ignorant of their existence until his return to France; and he might enclose Leblond's letter to Mr. Clayton, as an apology for his prolonged absence. Were the person who was entitled to inherit the fortune of the late Marquis de Denneville, involved in the slightest difficulties, or suffering on account of the want of those funds which he alone could furnish the means to recover, his correct mind and honourable principles would not for one instant have suffered him to withhold the papers; but he knew that the heir was in affluence, and in the midst of abundance, and had most probably ceased to be anxious on a subject which a long and hitherto impervious mystery had baffled all hopes of elucidating.

Urged by these reflections, De Rosann wrote a short letter to Leblond, in which he declared a fixed intention of paying the most implicit obedience to his directions, and thanked him for his kind promise of procuring the royal pardon. Our hero concluded by saying, that the moment Leblond chose to recall him to France, in the name of his secret protectors, he was willing to follow their directions, and should feel proud of an opportunity to demonstrate his gratitude towards those who had already assisted him in the midst of his embarrassments and disgrace.

De Rosann then replied to the friendly letter he had received from Mr. Clayton. He enclosed the epistle Leblond had sent him from Paris, and begged



his excellent benefactor to believe, that if it were not with the hope of procuring his pardon, he should not remain in England another moment. He did not, however, mention one word relative to the documents he retained in his possession ; but he merely said, that when they met he would explain *viva voce* the motives that had originally induced him to change the place of his destination from Paris to London so soon after their conversation and agreement at the farm-house. He concluded his letter with a hope that Mrs. Clayton might one day be induced to award him the hand of her daughter, particularly as he should soon be able to return to France openly and fearlessly, and not, as he left it, trembling at the sight of a police officer, and dreading to be arrested every moment.

Would the reader think of asking, even if we were sufficiently careless to forget so important a fact, whether De Rosann availed himself of Mr. Clayton's permission to write to Eloise on this occasion as well as on the last, which we faithfully recorded in a former chapter ? Alfred did *not* forget to address a letter to the amiable being whom he adored ; and it was considerably longer than the one directed to her uncle. But before he terminated his epistle, he did not fail to inform Eloise of Mr. Clayton's promise, that, if he remained in London, she should be allowed to write a few lines to console him in return ; and he claimed at her hands the fulfilment of a pledge made for her by her uncle.

When these letters were despatched to the post-office, the mind of our hero felt eased of a considerable cause of anxiety ; and he retired to rest that night with feelings of felicity such as he had not experienced for some time.



## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE BALL.

IT is most singular, how the most important events of our lives spring from circumstances which the association with those episodes in our daily destinies alone renders worthy of notice. The licentiousness of an abandoned woman (according to the popular fable), caused a disastrous war of ten years' duration, and the eventual sack of a mighty city: the distaste of a Roman senator's daughter for the rods of the lictors, originated the election of plebeian instead of patrician consuls. On the mighty sea of life, the smallest rock will occasion shipwreck—the slightest current cause a deviation from a certain course—the most insignificant quicksand swallow up immense wealth—the appearance of a sudden mirage wrecks the sanguine mariner upon the nearest peninsula. And such are the destinies of man! As he walks upon level ground, a pebble may cause him to stumble: as he deviates from his habitual path, a quagmire may await his unconscious steps!

De Rosann was engaged to dine with Mr. Robson, and accompany his family to Mrs. Wentworth's ball in the evening. On account of a trifling difference between the clocks at the West End and the one by which the household economy of the worthy banker's spouse was regulated, our hero arrived a few minutes before six, and happened to find Selina again alone in the drawing-room. He would willingly have avoided the disagreeableness of a *tête-a-tête* now that his mind entertained the idea of Selina's attachment to him; but it was impossible to combat against the decrees of fate, or the embarrassments of chance; and he endeavoured



to assume those easy manners, and the half-familiar, half-respectful style of conversation, which he hoped would convince her that he considered her in the light of a friend, and simply as the daughter of one to whom he was under obligations, and in whose family he had accidentally become intimate. But he could not help noticing the pale countenance of Selina, and the confusion with which she received him; for her delicate mind instantly suspected that Alfred might imagine those interviews were purposely so arranged as to take place in the absence of witnesses. It was therefore in vain and fruitlessly she essayed to be cheerful; her smiles were melancholy, her laughter was forced, and her gaiety was assumed. All this did not escape the observation of our hero.

“Had I not been engaged to dine with you this evening,” said Alfred, “I should nevertheless have done myself the pleasure of calling.”

“For a particular purpose again?” asked Selina, playfully alluding to a portion of the conversation that took place between them the day before.

“Precisely. I have procrastinated my departure.”

“For four-and-twenty hours?” inquired Selina, with a sigh.

“Do you wish it was for no more?” cried De Rosann, carelessly: then recollecting that his words might probably awaken disagreeable ideas, he hastened to add, “But, of course, that is a matter of indifference to you. I shall not leave London at least till the expiration of a fortnight, and perhaps not before the 17th or 18th of July: the latter period is the more probable.”

“Now, indeed, we shall have time to discover your faults,” cried Selina, while the joy that the news afforded her flashed in her eyes, and revived a portion of the faded roses that had nearly died upon her cheeks. “Pray, does papa know of this sudden change in your determinations—this new proof of a fickle mind! Ah! how can men reproach us poor frail creatures with



vacillation and capriciousness, when they are not themselves more constant to their purposes than

the shade  
By the light quivering aspen made,

as our great poet and novelist of the north has expressed it!"

"A gallant man will reproach the fair sex for nothing, save its cruelty and indifference to the sighs of its despairing admirers," said De Rosann, with the common politeness of a Frenchman, who seldom suffers an opportunity of paying a compliment to pass unheeded. But Alfred's reflections were wandering to other matters at the time,—he thought of his faithful Eloise, and uttered the above words in a moment of absence, regardless of their import, and forgetful of the manner in which they might be interpreted. Selina was surprised to hear such a sentence issue from the lips of De Rosann: he usually forbore to address an useless flattery to one whose accomplished mind soared above those trifles; and hitherto their conversation had invariably turned upon subjects which, being of a graver nature than the common-place topics of the day, did not admit of the idle nothings and *petites bagatelles* usually addressed by empty-headed young men to vain and conceited women. Selina therefore attached a certain importance to the reply that De Rosann had made to her defence of her own sex; and instantaneously cast a memorial glance over her conduct, to ascertain if she had ever been guilty of the slightest indifference towards our hero. Her rapid investigation was satisfactory to herself on this head; but it caused a sigh to agitate her bosom, as she inwardly thought, "Alfred has never expressed himself in such terms before: perhaps he begins to perceive that I am vain and giddy, like the generality of my sex, and therefore intends to offer me up the same incense of adulation that he and his contemporaries present to the coquetish and the proud."

De Rosann himself forgot the words he had so imprudently uttered as soon as they had left his lips; the



image of Eloise was uppermost in his mind, and for several seconds he did not appear to recollect that he was in the society of another individual. At length, awaking from his transient reverie, before his absence had amounted to actual rudeness, he hastened to renew the conversation.

"I think you asked me, Miss Robson, if your father were aware of my intention to remain in London a short time longer?"

"O, I dare say he is ; for if you were as important a personage as Victor Hugo or Lamartine in disguise, and if you had entrusted your secret to him, with injunctions to communicate it to his own family only, he would follow the safer plan, and never divulge it at all."

"The generality of men of business are thus cautious," observed De Rosann : "but I assure you that he is not yet informed of this change in my plans."

"Here he is to answer for himself," cried Selina.

"My dear friend," said Alfred, taking the banker's hand, "your daughter will not believe that you are as yet ignorant of my resolution to trouble you a fortnight or a month longer with my frequently repeated visits."

"Indeed! I am heartily glad to hear that you do not leave us so precipitately: at the same time I wish your departure was procrastinated for a year rather than a month."

"Now you believe me, Miss Selina," said De Rosann, smiling.

"I never really doubted you," was the reply : and Selina blushed, for she thought her answer was given in such a tone as to make Alfred fancy that she intended to convey a more serious meaning, and a promise of full reliance on his word and assurance on every other occasion. Our hero noticed the blush which painted her cheek, and was obliged to confess within himself that his ideas were not unfounded, and that Selina already experienced the germination of a sincere but ill-starred affection.

The entrance of Mrs. and Mary Robson, and the



speedy announcement of dinner, put an end to any farther conversation for the moment: but it was easy to perceive that Selina was in much better spirits than she had been during the last four-and-twenty hours.

At nine o'clock the carriage drove up to the door, and De Rosann assisted the ladies to ascend the steps. Mr. Robson plead urgent business, that would occupy him all the evening, as an excuse for not accompanying them; and De Rosann accordingly occupied his seat. The worthy banker was himself no friend to balls; he liked them well enough for young people who could dance; but he did not think it becoming for an old married man to be seen at places where youth and beauty were alone remarkable and *recherché*. Cards were equally his abhorrence; and on these occasions he was never so much delighted as when he could prevail upon a friend to take his place as *chaperon* to his family.

In twenty minutes the carriage stopped at a house in Jermyn-street. Alfred presented his hand to help the ladies in their descent from the vehicle, and then offered his arm to Mrs. Robson, while the two sisters followed close behind. They were speedily introduced to the splendid *salons* of gaiety and light, where the dancing had already commenced, and where the all-attentive Mrs. Wentworth was busily occupied in receiving her numerous visitors. To some she behaved distantly, but politely,—to others more familiarly,—to several she spoke a few words as they passed on—and to a few she tendered two fingers of her right hand. Mrs. Robson was honoured by this last mark of intimacy; De Rosann was presented in due form, and the Misses Robson were addressed by the fashionable hostess as “her young friends, Mary and Selina.” When this ceremony was accomplished, De Rosann conducted Mrs. Robson and her daughters to chairs at the farther end of the room; and having engaged the hand of Selina for the next *quadrille*, he mingled with the gorgeously dressed crowd, under the supposition that during the intervals between each dance it was not customary to lounge near the seats oc-



cupied by the ladies ; such being the *etiquette* in his own country, whence, with a few exceptions, issue to the rest of Europe all the laws of politeness that control the society of the higher classes in their fashionable *reunions*.

“How do you do, De Rosann?” cried a voice near him; and when our hero turned round to reply to this familiar salutation, he recognised Belle-Rose, with a quizzing-glass to his right eye, staring most rudely at every lady who had any pretensions to beauty. He was dressed in the extreme of fashion,—a magnificent gold chain hung round his neck, and was apparently attached to as handsome a watch in his waistcoat pocket; the glove was purposely withdrawn from his right hand, to display the valuable rings that glittered on his fingers, and his countenance was radiant with joy and self-satisfaction. He was leaning on the arm of a young Englishman, who spoke French with a horrible accent, and who repeated the words “*Monsieur le Comte*,” as often and as loudly as he could, in every answer he gave to his companion’s questions, or every remark he spontaneously uttered himself.

De Rosann replied to the *soi-disant* Count’s salutation with a low and distant bow. His wishes were understood ; Belle-Rose did not care to trouble him any farther; and the pressure of the crowd, caused by the arrival of new guests, soon separated them from each other’s view.

“There is a man,” thought our hero, in his own mind, “who contrives to push himself into the fashionable circles of London, by the aid of a little swaggering, a little effrontery, and a little impudence.”

In a quarter of an hour the music recommenced, and De Rosann sought his partner. Selina was dressed in virgin-white. Her hair was unadorned save by a single rose, which resembled her raiment, and a small wreath of pearls. Her necklace, her ear-rings, and her bracelets, were all composed of those modest beads. Alfred could not help regarding her with a look of admiration, and he thought of Eloise as he



gazed. The idea of how far more transcendant was the loveliness of his own dear girl than the beauties of Selina, caused a smile of satisfaction to play upon his countenance; and the self-deluded young lady did not fail to notice it, and appreciate its origin in her favour. Perhaps she fancied that she was not indifferent to our hero; peradventure her fond imagination deceived her with the hope that she had pleased him : at all events her features expressed a placid contentment and happiness. De Rosann remarked the renovation of her spirits, and supposed that his resolution to procrastinate his departure was the cause.

The gay *quadrille* commenced—"glanced the many twinkling feet" of those engaged in threading its mazes—and the enlivening sounds of the music fell joyously on every ear. Selina danced with grace, but without affectation; and her bewitching form was the admiration of several idlers who stood near to witness the evolutions of "Terpsichore's votaries." Amongst them our hero recognised the two gentlemen who were present when La Motte was exposed at Mr. Robson's table; and as he returned their salutation with a polite bow, he noticed that Mr. Jenkins had changed his silver spectacles for gold ones on this occasion, and that Mr. Goldsmith had added four new seals to the seven already pendant to his watch-chain. The recollection of the extraordinary efforts of their united imaginations at Mr. Robson's house called a smile to his lips, and at the same moment his glances met those of Selina, as she returned from completing the figure called *en avant deux*, or *l'été*. Alas! poor Selina—again she mistook the meaning of that smile—again she appropriated it as an offering to herself—again her heart felt light, her pride was gratified—and again she was mistaken!

It was not singular if Selina and De Rosann were the most remarkable couple that graced the *quadrille*. The handsome person of our hero, and the sylph-like form of his modest partner, could not fail to attract attention. His coal-black hair was parted above his



forehead, with a species of "premeditated negligence"—if the reader will excuse and condescend to appreciate the meaning of the antithesis—which gave a peculiar expression to his countenance; his dark eyes were brilliant amidst that glare of even superfluous light; his slender figure was set off to advantage by the clothes which the prince of London tailors had fabricated. Selina was nearly as tall as himself; her years were evidently but two or three less than his own, and there appeared altogether a certain harmony and fitness in the mere fact of these two beings dancing together, that many a spectator inquired of his neighbour if they were not lovers. That which was doubted at first became magnified to certainty, when passed on with various amplifications from one to another. At length the report reached the ears of Belle-Rose, through the medium of his friend the Englishman; and the self-styled Count, with his natural inclination to lying, instantly declared that "his banker and intimate acquaintance, Robson, had confided the secret of De Rosann and Selina's engagement to him only the day before, when he went to draw for a few hundreds; that the happy couple were to be united on the first of the following month, and that Robson had settled ten thousand pounds upon his daughter." This news was speedily disseminated amongst the various acquaintances of the young Englishman on whose arm Belle-Rose was lounging; and in half an hour there was scarcely a single soul in the room that had not heard, and did not believe the report, save our hero, Mrs. Robson, and her two daughters. Issuing from so respectable a source as the Count d'Elsigny, and emanating from an authority so good as a fellow-countryman of De Rosann—who for a moment would have thought of doubting the assertion?

When both the Misses Robson were engaged in the second *quadrille*, the gentlemen of the spectacles and the seals approached the spouse of their friend the banker, and entered into conversation.



"M. De Rosann is here, I see," said Mr. Goldsmith, after some common-place remarks.

"He was invited by the Colonel," returned Mrs. Robson. "They dined in each other's company at our house a few days ago; and although the Colonel assisted Wellington—or rather the Prussians—to beat the French, he does not dislike them individually."

"M. De Rosann appears a very nice young man," observed Mr. Jenkins, adjusting his spectacles.

"Of course, Mrs. Robson thinks so," added the other slyly.

"If such were not my opinion, I should scarcely suffer him to associate with my daughters," returned the banker's wife.

"Very natural! very natural!" exclaimed Mr. Goldsmith, rattling his seals: "but I did not think Robson had any secrets from an old friend."

"Secrets!" cried Mrs. Robson.

"O yes!—we are not blind, you know, my dear madam," chimed in Mr. Jenkins. "M. De Rosann is very good-looking, very genteel, and clever, for anything that I know. Miss Selina is pretty, lady-like, and accomplished."

"I understand your allusion," said Mrs. Robson, somewhat haughtily: "but I can assure you that your suspicions are totally unfounded; so much so," continued the worthy lady, "that M. De Rosann himself purposes to leave London in three weeks or a month."

"Hem!" muttered he of the spectacles.

"Indeed!" exclaimed he of the seals.

"Therefore, if you have communicated to any one your suppositions, which are as groundless as your fanciful arrangement of the scene that took place some evenings ago at our house—relative to Lebrun, or La Motte, you know—"

"Ah! there is my friend Lord Walter!" cried Mr. Jenkins, hastily bowing to Mrs. Robson, and mingling with the crowd.



“Allow me to fetch you a glass of lemonade, madam,” exclaimed Mr. Goldsmith immediately after; and he disappeared before Mrs. Robson had concluded her sentence.

The *quadrille* was now finished, and the Misses Robson were handed to their chairs by the gentlemen with whom they had been dancing. They were surprised to find their mother in an ill-humour, and inquired the reason; but she was too delicate to tell them the real truth, and satisfied them by an innocent invention. De Rosann interrupted the maternal evasion by a solicitation for the pleasure of dancing another *quadrille* with Miss Selina. He did not invite her sister, because she could not speak French, and it was useless for two people to stand like statues in the middle of a ball-room. The delicacy of his motives was fully appreciated, and when explained to Mary by Selina, was thanked by a smile.

The minds of the scandal-hunting and inquisitive were more convinced than ever of the truth of the pervading report concerning the engagement subsisting between our hero and Miss Selina Robson, when they stood up to dance with each other a second time. It did not enter into the recollection of a soul that a friend could be thus twice honoured as well as a lover. Every indifferent glance that De Rosann cast upon the mild countenance of Selina, was noticed as a look of affection; and every time he uttered a word to his attentive partner, it was construed into a vow of tenderness and fidelity.

When the *quadrille* was concluded, De Rosann strolled into the card-room, and approached the *écarté*-table, round which a number of young men were gathered to bet their sovereigns, or to witness the game. A thin, long-visaged person was seated on one side of the table, and the young Englishman, who accompanied Belle-Rose, was on the other. The name of the latter was Markham. The stakes were high, and the anxiety of the players was excessive. Markham's opponent had already won considerable



sums ; and his success at this rubber appeared certain. Fortune, however, decided against him, and Markham gained the last point with an air of triumph. The other instantly left his seat, according to the general usage of the game, and made way for any one who was adventurous enough to occupy it. A sudden fancy seized hold of De Rosann's mind ; and he instantly assumed the forsaken chair. No sooner had he thus rashly sate down to play with a stranger, than he heartily repented, and would have given much to be able to retire with decency ; for Belle-Rose drew near the table at the same time, and, thrusting forward his head, desired Markham to bet five sovereigns for him.

"Very well, my dear Count," cried his friend : I hope I shall not be the cause of you losing them."

"Never fear," returned Belle-Rose ; and he placed himself at the back of Markham's chair to assist him with his advice.

De Rosann laid ten pounds upon the cloth, and turned up the king the first deal, besides making two points in addition to the one thus secured. Markham appeared uneasy, particularly as he had himself volunteered to cover half of the cash which our hero had wagered, and he had not yet produced a shilling.

"Why do you not lay down your money?" inquired Belle-Rose: "five sovereigns for yourself—and as much for me. If, you refuse to take up M. De Rosann's stakes, suffer some one else to have the option, or not, as he chooses?"

"There is no hurry," said Markham, evidently embarrassed: "I am good for a paltry ten-pound note, I hope," he added with a faint smile, while one or two gentlemen, that were looking on, exchanged suspicious glances with each other.

De Rosann did not say a word, but pursued the game in a calm and quiet manner. Five minutes decided it in his favour.

"I owe you ten sovereigns, M. De Rosann," said



Markham, a deep blush overspreading his countenance. "Will you give me my revenge?"

"Certainly," answered our hero; "if no one be desirous of taking your place, which, according to the laws of the game, you have forfeited."

"No—I am free to retain it, I fancy," returned Markham, having glanced hastily around upon the spectators near the table: "and as I have a twenty pound note in my pocket, we will put off the settlement of gains or losses till the fate of the next rubber be known."

"With pleasure," said our hero. "I shall leave the ten sovereigns I before staked on the board."

"You may advance another five for me, Markham," cried Belle-Rose, once more thrusting forward his head, having that evening expended a shilling's worth of Rowland's Macassar oil on his curls.

"Very well, Count," replied the toady. "Then I have ten sovereigns engaged once more, M. De Rosann."

"I will cover them," answered our hero calmly; and he placed the ten sovereigns he had already laid upon the table, in a heap.

"'Tis bad to play on credit," said the knight of the spectacles to his friend of the seals; for these two gentleman had been attentive observers of the game ever since they left Mrs. Robson, the one to seek his friend Lord Walter, and the other to procure a glass of lemonade for the banker's spouse. But the former was totally unacquainted with Lord Walter; and Mrs. Robson never saw the latter with the promised beverage. The reminiscence of their foolish ideas about the drama, which they had seen at the Haymarket and the Adelphi, were somewhat disagreeable chords to touch upon.

"I hate credit: all debt is dishonest," said Mr. Goldsmith, in answer to his friend's remark.

"And yet your tailor told me the other day that you owed him five-and-thirty pounds," observed Mr. Jenkins.



"The same tailor who arrested you last Christmas, was it not?" retorted he of the seals.

"Three to one," cried De Rosann; and a solemn silence ensued around the table. At the next deal our hero marked the king, and threw down his cards, having the queen, knave, and ten in his hand.

"Will you allow me to try my luck once more?" inquired Markham, fumbling in his pocket.

"I had rather not continue the game," answered Alfred: "and I moreover see some one ready to take your place."

"Let us settle accounts, then—I owe you twenty pounds—ten for myself, and ten for my friend, the Count," said Markham, evidently disappointed at De Rosann's refusal to retain his seat, and still fumbling in his pocket. "Well—this is odd—I must have left it at home—I could have sworn that I had it about me—"

De Rosann said nothing, but waited patiently for the other to hand him over his money.

"This is most extraordinary," continued Markham, his face the colour of scarlet—every eye being fixed upon him—and our hero's tranquillity and silence appearing a mockery for the purpose of increasing his embarrassment. "I must have left my money at home: but the Count, of course, has his purse about him; he drew eight hundred pounds yesterday morning at Robson's. D'Elsigny—where are you?" but not even an echo answered "Where!" The noble Count had disappeared the moment De Rosann threw down his cards, and no reply was given to the voice of his friend.

"I am waiting, sir," said De Rosann coolly.

"Indeed I am sorry, M. De Rosann—very sorry—but I have evidently left my purse at home. Will you favour me with your address, that I may enclose you the amount the first thing in the morning?"

"And supposing you had won my money, Mr. Markham, you would have taken it: therefore I have been playing against my own interests."



"How—what !" exclaimed Markham, delighted at having an excuse to bully ; " do you mean to insinuate that you stand a chance of losing the few paltry pounds I owe you ?"

" I think that nothing is more probable," answered our hero with the same imperturbable coolness.

" You are no gentleman !" shouted Markham.

" And you are a sharper !" returned Alfred gently : " but I do not choose to disturb the tranquillity of this hospitable mansion—our kind hosts must not regret the invitation they have vouchsafed to me, at least ; there is my address, sir," continued De Rosann, throwing a card upon the table ; " may I solicit your's ?"

Markham hastily complied with our hero's request, or, rather, command, and shortly after withdrew in the greatest possible confusion ; while all admired and expressed their approbation of the gentlemanly conduct of the young Frenchman.

But what had become of Belle-Rose ? The moment he saw that his friend had lost the game, he gave his waistcoat-pocket one tap with his fingers, to convince himself that it was empty, and suddenly made his escape from the *écarté*-table. Arrived at the door of the room set apart exclusively to dancing, he found the passage barred by the ladies and gentlemen occupied in a *quadrille* ; and all hopes of passing round, without treading on the toes of the old dowagers and maiden aunts, who sate in solemn state against the walls to witness the amusements of " the young people," were totally vain. Belle-Rose was therefore obliged to wait at the door, which formed the communication between the card-room and the dancing-room, until the *quadrille* was finished.

In about a minute he felt his arm slightly pulled ; and turning hastily round, saw himself confronted by a gentleman, whose nose supported an immense pair of gold spectacles, and whose face he recollected to have seen peering over the shoulders of the loiterers round the card-table.



"*Monsieur le Comte,*" began our old acquaintance, Mr. Jenkins.

"What the devil would you have with me?" inquired Belle-Rose in French, his voice being anything but suave and dulcet at the moment.

Mr. Jenkins gave no reply, but pointed to the card-table, and made a sign with the fingers of his right hand in the out-stretched palm of his left. Belle-Rose understood full-well the meaning of the worthy gentleman, and turned his back upon him with a look of the most sovereign contempt, purposely placing the heel of his shoe on the officious individual's toes at the same time. Mr. Jenkins gave a terrible start, and fell with such violence against his friend of the seals, who was endeavouring to force a passage through the crowd at the door, that the watch-chain and its appendages rattled like pebbles against a window. When their confusion, into which this sudden shock had thrown them, was somewhat abated, Mr. Jenkins looked around to discover Belle-Rose. But the music had ceased—the *quadrille* was concluded—and the *soi-disant* Count had taken advantage of the momentary bustle to make his escape. Arrived in the hall, a footman in gorgeous livery demanded of the retiring guest whether he had brought a cloak or great-coat with him; and as the eye of Belle-Rose fell at the same instant upon a magnificent mantle lined with sables, he replied in the affirmative, although he had no real claim to the said garment. After a proper delay in pretending to search for his own property, he unhooked the splendid mantle that had before attracted his attention; and having cast it negligently on his left shoulder, he placed half-a-crown in the footman's hand, and quitted the house, totally reckless of what might become of his friend Markham.

When De Rosann rejoined Mrs. Robson and her daughters, he found them all three extremely anxious on his account—particularly Selina, in whose eye glistened a tear. The report of his quarrel with Markham, and the certainty of a duel, had reached



their ears ; but the particulars of the tale were entirely in favour of our hero ; and while his friends deplored the disagreeable occurrence, they could not help admiring his noble conduct and manly courage.

“ I hope the dispute will lead to no desperate result,” said Selina in a low voice, that was almost choked with an internal emotion which she vainly endeavoured to conceal.

“ The person with whom I had a few words,” answered De Rosann, “ is most probably a coward ; and I suspect that there is but little chance of his seeking an honourable satisfaction.”

“ You wish to make the matter appear more trifling than it really is,” continued Selina : “ I am, however, certain it is serious—and I implore you, M. De Rosann—if you have any regard—”

Selina stopped short in the middle of her sentence ; and when she raised her eyes to De Rosann’s countenance, she saw that he was gazing on her in astonishment. An unpleasant impression was immediately conveyed to her mind. She thought that if he felt the slightest interest in her welfare, or that if he knew she was attached to him, he would not have looked at her with wonder, but with gratitude and delight, as she was about to implore him not to dare danger, nor be induced to combat against a common swindler. Alfred noticed that the excitement, which had marked the commencement of her supplication, verged into a melancholy expression that betrayed an inward sorrow returning with reflection ; and he endeavoured to direct the conversation to other subjects. All his attempts were, however, unavailing ; Selina perpetually referred to the probability of a duel ; and would only abandon the subject when De Rosann assured her that no such fatal result was to be anticipated.

It was not until four o’clock in the morning that he retired to his couch, where his eyes were soon closed in slumber ; and while he dreamt of his faithful Eloise so far away from him in another clime, he wist not



that a young heart was filled with his image, and that he was the innocent cause of pain to the unfortunate victim of a love whose increasing fervour experienced no return.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### THE RESULT.

DE ROSANN did not awake till a late hour; and some minutes elapsed ere he could compose his ideas, so as to review his conduct of the preceding evening. The certainty that he had made a deep impression upon the heart of the too sensitive Selina, was a subject of much more grief to our hero than the probability of being shortly obliged to risk his life in a duel. His generous disposition could not do otherwise than sincerely commiserate the situation of the unfortunate girl, and deeply deplore her misplaced affections. He therefore made up his mind to seek an explanation with her as speedily as possible. That explanation he might readily bring about by hinting at his attachment to Eloise—a circumstance as yet unrevealed even to Mr. Robson; and, in case the reader should marvel at this silence and reserve towards so excellent a friend, let us hasten to apologize for our hero. He had retained his love-affair in his own breast, fearful that if Mrs. Clayton should accidentally have occasion to correspond with Mr. Robson, the circumstance might reach her ears; and De Rosann knew she would naturally be offended at his presumption in declaring he was destined to receive the hand of Eloise, when the mother so positively refused to listen to his suit in favour of her daughter. He now repented of this excess of delicacy; he reproached himself for not having merely hinted, a few



days ago, that his heart was devoted to another; and he made up his mind to repair, as quickly as he could, the incipient injury already done.

With regard to his quarrel, we have before stated that he did not suffer it to annoy him. He possessed the daring and reckless courage of a Frenchman; he did not trouble himself about the possibility of being killed, or, perhaps, mutilated for life; and when the recollection intruded itself upon his memory, he dismissed it with an expression of contempt, to the effect, "that it was *bagatelle* unworthy of consideration." It is in this particular point that the Frenchman differs so materially from the Englishman; not that the discrepancy consists in the courage of the one, and the cowardice of the other, because such an assertion would be ridiculous and false in the extreme. An Englishman is as brave as a Frenchman; but the valour of the former is mingled with caution and prudence; and the dauntlessness of the latter is blind, and indifferent to consequences. Thus was it, that often on the field of battle the magnanimity and lion-daring of the sons of Gaul were rendered unavailing, and necessitated to succumb, by the cool and calculating courage of those who fought under the British standard. The Frenchman is all vivacity and rashness; he is like the mettled steed that hears the bugle of the huntsman and the howling of the dogs; he often experiences defeat and disgrace, by aiming at impossibilities in a moment of excitement: he rushes headlong upon the bayonet, and does not wait to wrest it from the enemy's grasp.

While De Rosann was seated at his breakfast table, he was surprised by a visit from Mr. Robson.

"I have just been informed of your dispute last night with a Mr. Markham," said the worthy banker, panting for breath, and throwing himself upon a chair; "and I hastened to ascertain the particulars. Is it likely that you will hear any more of the individual, who, according to the account Selina gave me, is nothing more than a common swindler or adventurer."



"I am doubtful," returned De Rosann carelessly. "But how is your family after the fatigues of the ball?"

"The devil take the ball!" cried Mr. Robson. "You seem to think as much of a very—*very* serious matter, as I do of the greatest trifle."

"Do you allude to the probability of a duel?" asked De Rosann, sipping his chocolate with the most ineffable *sang-froid*.

"Certainly, my young friend; in England, it is not customary to regard life as an object without value. Existence bears a high *per-centage* amongst us."

"If you wish me to reflect for one moment upon the matter," said Alfred, assuming a grave look to oblige the good-natured banker, who was exceedingly anxious on his friend's account, "I must obey you; and the result of my rumination will be, that if Mr. Markham can possibly muster the money to pay me, he will also find the courage to fight. He has a reputation at stake; and a duel would restore him to public favour."

"In that case, my dear Rosann, I must find you a second," cried Mr. Robson: "but I hope to God that Markham, or whatever his name may be, will look in vain for the cash. You know I would myself willingly act as your friend on such an occasion—but a banker, and the father of a family—not a young man either—"

"Do not think of offering an apology," interrupted our hero. "Should I require a second, you will procure me one—and that is sufficient."

"Adieu, then, for the present: I must return to my counting-house, which I never quit on a morning, save on urgent occasions."

Mr. Robson had not left the room five minutes, when one of the waiters entered, and informed De Rosann that the Count d'Elsigny desired to speak to him on very particular business. Our hero ordered the servant to show the Count to his apartment; and in a moment Belle-Rose swaggered into the room.



"My dear Rosann," said he, wiping the perspiration from his forehead with a perfumed cambric handkerchief, "I am come upon a pleasant little affair, which will doubtless afford four people an excellent morning's amusement."

"I already divine the vicarious object of your visit," returned De Rosann coolly; "and beg you will hasten to apprise me if I be right."

"In the first place, Markham has sent you the twenty pounds," continued Belle-Rose, laying the money upon the table; "and as I have expended every farthing of the cash for which I sold the papers to you, or to Mr. Robson, I should be very much obliged if you would lend me these paltry bank-notes till I can repay you. Remember, I have religiously preserved our secret, my dear De Rosann."

"Keep the money, in God's name," exclaimed our hero; "and do not make a merit of having refrained from divulging that which would ruin your speculations, as well as injure me, perhaps, in the opinion of my friends, who, unfortunately, are not free from the usually-prevailing prejudices."

"I like your harangue very much, De Rosann," said Belle-Rose; "and I do not hesitate to thank you for the cash. By-the-bye, do you not think I am an essential ornament to a ball-room, and a fit representative of the *noblesse* of our nation?"

"Be so kind as to come to the point; I am in a hurry to go out for an hour or two, and have no time to waste in idle conversation."

"Three words, then," cried Belle-Rose, starting up, and running his fingers through locks teeming with pomatum, or bears'-grease: "to-morrow morning at six o'clock—pistols, of course—St. John's Wood—near the Regent's Park—each with one friend—we will take the surgeon."

"Agreed!" ejaculated De Rosann; and Belle-Rose withdrew, much to our hero's satisfaction.

The only preparation that De Rosann made, was to enclose the papers of the late Marquis de Denne-



ville in an envelope, which he carefully sealed, and directed to Mr. Clayton. He then wrote instructions to that gentleman, explaining the nature of the documents, and the manner in which they fell into his hands at the farm-house of Louis Dorval; and he enclosed a letter for Eloise, wherein he expressed the unchanged and fervent love he bore her, and his sincere hope that she might still be happy in her choice of a husband to become her legal protector and the partner of her fortunes. These epistles were to be forwarded, with the deeds, to their proper destination, in case of Alfred's fall.

Having thus arranged his affairs, our hero hastened to Thread-needle street, and informed Mr. Robson of all that had passed since they separated an hour or two before. The kind-hearted banker could not conceal his agitation and alarm at the danger to which De Rosann was exposed: he however promised to call upon him early the following morning with a friend, and hinted that it would be better not to inform the ladies of the anticipated meeting. De Rosann perfectly acquiesced in Mr. Robson's opinion, and did not even throw himself in the way of a multiplicity of inquiries, which would doubtless have taken place, had he proceeded to the drawing-room to pay his respects to Mrs. Robson and her daughters.

In the meantime Selina suffered the most excruciating torments: and her internal agony was the more acute, because she was obliged to conceal it from the observation of her mother and sister. Hour after hour passed away, and De Rosann did not make his appearance as usual. Her agitated mind instantly pictured an exaggeration of all the most horrible results that could possibly have ensued from a duel; for she was perfectly convinced, that the dispute would end in a hostile meeting. She fancied she saw Alfred bleeding, pale, and dying on the fatal plain: then she thought, that perhaps he was already gone to another world, and that his heart was pierced with a deadly weapon. Never was suspense so terrible, till the hour



of dinner brought her father from his office; and in a trembling voice she inquired, if he had seen M. De Rosann? The banker answered in the affirmative, adding, that the quarrel with Mr. Markham would most probably lead to no disagreeable consequences, and that particular business alone prevented our hero from calling on Mrs. and the Misses Robson in the course of the day. Selina felt somewhat relieved by these assurances; but she still saw the probability of a duel, and in vain essayed to banish her unpleasant ideas entirely from her imagination.

As early as five o'clock on the following morning, did Mr. Robson knock at the door of De Rosann's bed-chamber. Our hero was already dressed, and about to sit down to breakfast. He welcomed the banker with the utmost cordiality, and was surprised to see that no one accompanied him. But before he had time to inquire the reason, a gentleman made his appearance at the top of the stairs, and was instantly recognised by Mr. Robson as the intended second. He was accordingly introduced to De Rosann, to whom he expressed his sorrow, at acquiring the honour of Alfred's acquaintance, under circumstances so peculiarly disagreeable; he however declared his willingness to assist our hero to the utmost of his ability, as a hostile meeting was apparently unavoidable. Mr. Herbert—for that was the gentleman's name—spoke French with tolerable fluency: and it was chiefly on this account that he had been requested by Mr. Robson to act as De Rosann's friend on the occasion.

To the astonishment of both the banker and Mr. Herbert, neither of whom could touch a morsel, De Rosann ate with a prodigious appetite; and when Mr. Robson was no longer able to contain his astonishment at such an extraordinary instance of *sang froid*, the young man coolly observed, "that he did not dare venture to encounter the chilly atmosphere with an empty stomach." A smile of satisfaction played upon the countenance of Mr. Herbert, as our hero made this



remark; for he could not help feeling a momentary pride in the courage of his principal.

"This is your first affair of honour," said the banker, addressing his youthful friend, and vainly endeavouring to swallow a piece of toast.

"My first, and perhaps my last," answered De Rosann, attacking the breast of a cold fowl, which he had already despoiled of its wings.

"The idea does not rob you of your appetite," remarked Mr. Herbert. "I was engaged as second to a noble lord about six weeks ago," he continued; "and while I took a cup of tea at the breakfast table, he walked up and down the room in the greatest possible agitation."

"I do not wonder at his emotion," cried the banker, scarcely able to repress a shudder.

"And perhaps he was not a coward after all," said De Rosann, helping himself to some cold pigeon-pie and a huge slice of bread.

"No—on the contrary," returned Mr. Herbert, "when we arrived upon the ground, he was as cool as I am at this moment. He fought with a German baron—'twas at Wormwood Scrubs—"

"And what was the result!" inquired the banker, for the sake of saying something, while his limbs shivered, and his heart palpitated violently, as if he himself were one of the principals.

"The German was wounded in the leg, and he has been lame ever since," answered Mr. Herbert, forgetting that this information could not sound very consolatory to the ears of a nervous person, about to engage in an affair of honour.

"He was pointed out to me the night before last, at Mrs. Wentworth's ball," remarked De Rosann, as he commenced a second attack on the pigeon pie, to the astonishment of Mr. Robson.

"Allow me to inform you, that we have not ten minutes to spare, M. De Rosann," cried his second; "I always like to be punctual, even if I and my principal be not the first on the ground."



"I shall wait for you here—and God preserve you, my dear boy," exclaimed Robson, wiping away a tear. "Now go—I need not tell you to keep up your spirits—and once more, may God bless you!"

De Rosann endeavoured to console the excellent old man, by assurances of there being but little danger; and having succeeded in restoring him to partial tranquillity, he followed Herbert down stairs, and jumped into the cabriolet that waited for him at the door.

Markham and Belle-Rose had already arrived at the place of destination, when our hero and his second descended from the vehicle in the immediate vicinity of the appointed spot. Mr. Herbert and the self-styled Count d'Elsigny, proceeded to charge the pistols forthwith; while de Rosann watched the motions of his antagonist, whose face was ashy pale, and whose uneven steps, as he paced up and down the ground, betokened anything save self-possession and composure. He was evidently annoyed that the two seconds did not endeavour to arrange the matter amicably; but he dared not interfere in their proceedings, nor retract from the challenge he had somewhat rashly given.

When Belle-Rose and Herbert had charged the pistols in each other's presence, they drew lots to decide by whom the ground should be measured, and the signal given. Chance pronounced in favour of Belle-Rose; and he instantly commenced his duties: but he took such uncommonly small paces, when employed in tracing the distance which was to intervene between the spots occupied by the hostile parties, that Markham could with difficulty conceal his terror. De Rosann merely smiled at the friendly conduct of his ancient companion, and received the pistol from the hand of Mr. Herbert, as if it were a handsome present, tendered on a more jovial occasion. Not that there was anything cruel, or blood-thirsty in the calmness of our hero; his composure was purely the courageous indifference of a brave man, who does not fear to meet death face to face.



De Rosann and Markham now took their proper stations, and Belle-Rose stood at a little distance, making the third point of an imaginary right-angled triangle, of which the antagonists were the remaining two. And now all was ready—the foemen confronted each other—Belle-Rose inquired in a loud voice if they were prepared—both answered in the affirmative, one boldly, the other tremulously—and the handkerchief fell to the ground. The shots were fired almost at the same instant—and neither De Rosann nor Markham were touched. After a lengthened discussion between the seconds, the pistols were charged again, and presented to the combatants. Markham declared in a whisper to Belle-Rose, that he was satisfied, and that he did not wish to renew the combat. But the *soi-disant* Count cut him short with an assurance, “that he had too much regard for the honour of his principal to withdraw him, before he had either killed his man, or was winged himself.” Markham ventured another remonstrance, and Belle-Rose declared that he should either fight, or renounce his friendship forever. This assertion terminated the doubts and repugnance of the unfortunate Markham; and Herbert stepped forward with the handkerchief in his hand, to occupy, in his turn, the spot which Belle-Rose had just left. The signal was given a second time, the pistols were again levelled against two human beings by each other, the report of the murderous weapons echoed loudly on the ear, and Markham fell wounded to the ground.

The surgeon, who had waited at a little distance, and who had attentively watched the progress of the duel, now rushed forward like a vulture on his prey, and proceeded to examine the fallen champion. The ball had grazed his right side, just above the hip; but the wound was neither dangerous nor severe. De Rosann assisted Belle-Rose and Herbert to convey him to the carriage in which he had arrived; and the surgeon walked by their side, holding forth, in a very learned discourse, on what might have been the results, if the



ball had lodged in the sufferer's body. But as only Mr. Herbert and the unfortunate sufferer himself understood the language he spoke, the surgeon's oration was not productive of any wonderful effect.

When our hero and his second had thus done all they could to aid the wounded man, they recommended him to the care of Belle-Rose, and sought their own vehicle, to return to town. On their arrival at the hotel, Mr. Robson, who had anxiously posted himself at the window during the last half-hour, and who began to think the time very long, received De Rosann with open arms, and embraced him with such force, that Alfred was fain to cry out. Mr. Herbert was obliged to submit to the same ceremony, for having brought back the belligerent hero safe; and, having made both second and principal promise to dine with him that very afternoon, in order to drink a glass of champagne to the victor's success, the banker withdrew from the hotel, and returned to his own house, where he found a comfortable breakfast awaiting his arrival.

Selina was the first to notice the air of satisfaction and joy, with which her father entered the room; and Mrs. Robson expressed her curiosity to know what particular business could have made him quit his warm bed at so early an hour.

"Only a little affair, my love," cried the banker, rubbing his hands together, and seating himself at the table. "It was not exactly in my line, it is true: but a friend in such a predicament—"

"Lord! Mr. Robson, how mysterious you are!" exclaimed his better half: "cannot you entrust us with your secret?"

"No secret, my dear—no secret, I assure you: 'tis all over now—merely a meeting—"

"What! of Williams the stockbroker's creditors at five o'clock in the morning?" interrupted Mrs. Robson.

"Not at all: 'twas a meeting of a different nature," returned the banker, who seemed delighted to keep



his fair spouse in suspense; "a meeting at which you will never be, my love—a meeting, in fine, between Messieurs Markham and De Rosann!"

"A duel!" cried Selina, her countenance becoming deadly pale, and her bosom heaving a deep-drawn sigh.

"Our friend is safe, thank God!" continued the banker, helping himself to a hot buttered roll and an egg. "He behaved nobly, I understand—"

"You were not present, then, papa," said Mary.

"No, my love; Mr. Herbert officiated as M. De Rosann's second, and I remained at the hotel until their return. Markham was wounded in the ribs; but Alfred is untouched."

"Thank God!" cried Selina, involuntarily, her pale features becoming suddenly animated by an expression of joy, and then as rapidly suffused in blushes, when she noticed her mother and sister regarding her with peculiar attention.

"One would think you were in love with M. De Rosann, Selina," exclaimed Mary; "you are so energetic in your expressions of gratitude to the Almighty for having spared him, and your countenance changed so often, an observer could not have helped noticing your emotions."

"Sister," said Selina, calmly, "your remarks are unkind and ungenerous to a degree. I know M. De Rosann much better than you do, because my frequent visits to France with my father have enabled me to acquire a knowledge of his language: and a heart that is not made of iron cannot fail to feel rejoiced at the escape of one who saved us all from ruin, by exposing the treachery of a pretended friend."

"You speak like my own daughter, Selina!" cried Mr. Robson; "and Mary was wrong to reproach you."

"Nay—my intention was not wilfully to wound your feelings, dear sister; I spoke with levity, it is true—but more in pleasantry than in earnest."

"Let us drop the subject, Mary," said Selina, wiping away a tear from her eye, while her mother began to



think that the report she had heard at the ball was not entirely void of foundation, and that her younger daughter and De Rosann were really attached to each other. She however determined to hold her peace for the present, and watch their glances and their manners more particularly, ere she suffered her mind to form any decided opinion relative to the matter.

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## CHAPTER X.

### THE PROSPECTUS.

THE mind of Eloise experienced considerable relief when the receipt of De Rosann's letters communicated the certainty of his obtaining a full pardon at the hands of Charles the Tenth. Nor less did her uncle feel the purest satisfaction, as he reflected that a weighty obstacle to the match would thus indubitably be removed from the mind of his sister-in-law. The contents of Leblond's epistle pleaded as an ample apology for our hero's stay in London, both with Eloise and Mr. Clayton; and although the former sighed when she recollected how slowly slip away the weary hours when separated from those we love, she could not avoid inwardly applauding Alfred's courage, in thus determining to support an absence, which his honour rendered necessary, and which would be productive of such favourable results. She looked forward to the happy hours they might yet anticipate to pass in each other's society; and often—oh! oftendid she press De Rosann's letter to her lips, and to her bosom, when she retired to her bed-chamber to peruse it. Mr. Clayton was delighted at the brightening prospect which now animated the future; and he ceased to torment his sister-in-law about her obstinacy, as he called it, in refusing



to give her sanction to that which, sooner or later, she would be obliged to permit, if not approve.

De Rosann had begged Mr. Clayton and Eloise, in his letters to them both, not to inform Mrs. Clayton of the promise of pardon which he had received; and his wishes were strictly complied with, although he gave no reason for the request, which nevertheless did not appear singular; as both Eloise and her uncle divined the real truth the moment they perused their respective epistles, and guessed that De Rosann was desirous of surprising the conscientious mother, by producing his remission from all punishment and all stigma, when he should have obtained the precious documents, and when he returned to implore the now unrelenting parent to accord him the hand of her daughter. Mrs. Clayton was therefore kept entirely in the dark relative to these proceedings. She, however, noticed the animated countenance of Eloise, and perceived that the beautiful girl's spirits gradually improved as the colour returned to her cheeks; and she secretly applauded herself for the firmness with which she had acted, triumphantly observing to her brother-in-law, at the same time, that change of air and scene had not after all been without their effect.

Mr. Clayton longed to drop a hint, that perhaps she was deceived concerning the real cause of this change in her daughter's appearance and manners; but the entrance of Eloise, just as the first word trembled on the tip of his tongue, made him check his imprudent spirit of communicativeness, or of contradiction, and put an end to the conversation.

"Here is a strange-looking man, uncle, who desires to speak with you," said Eloise, vainly endeavouring to suppress a smile. "I think I have seen him before—but where, I cannot recollect. He is a Frenchman, fat, short, and red in the face."

"What is his business?" inquired Mr. Clayton.

"He insists upon seeing you: that is all that I can make him say," returned Eloise. "The servant waits your answer."



"Let him come in, then," cried the uncle.

The visiter was accordingly desired to enter ; and Mr. Clayton instantly recognised Champignon, "the best cook in Europe."

"Pray be seated, and acquaint me with your business," said Mr. Clayton, rather sharply; for the larder yet teemed with *patés de foie gras* and *cervelas sans ail*.\*

"I hope my presence is no intrusion," said Champignon, seating himself on the edge of a chair, and drawing from his coat-pocket a large roll of papers, which he laid upon the table: "but I recollected that M. De Rosann appeared to be somewhat acquainted with you," he continued, addressing Mr. Clayton, "if one might judge from the way you walked together, as close as two pigeons in a pie, or a couple of capons on a spit—"

"Well, what then?" cried Mr. Clayton, impatiently, while Eloise was ready to die of curiosity to know what the gastronomer could want with De Rosann.

"I recollected your apparent intimacy together," proceeded Champignon; "and having occasion to write to M. De Rosann, I have ventured to trouble you for his address."

"And what the devil have you to say to M. De Rosann?" inquired Mr. Clayton, surveying the comical countenance of the gastronomer with a severe glance, which so terrified the unfortunate wretch that he made a bound upon his chair, and missing the edge fell heavily on the floor. This circumstance restored Mr. Clayton to his usual good humour; and he said something consolatory to poor Champignon to give him courage, while Eloise offered him a glass of *liqueur*, which he accepted with many thanks, declaring that it was almost as good as his own, and that he would send up a bottle the moment he returned home.

"You asked me what I had to say to M. De Ro-

\* Bologna sausages without garlic.



sann," observed Champignon, when he had swallowed the *eau-de-vie de Dantzic*, and placed the glass upon the table: "I will tell you, since you know how to treat me with the consideration due to my talents and culinary acquirements. It has been a favourite idea of mine for some time past, to establish a *restaurant* in every principal town of France—"

"A mighty undertaking!" cried Mr. Clayton.

"Yes; and for a mighty purpose too," added the gastronomer.

"What is it? I am very curious to be acquainted with your schemes."

"For the purpose of serving up, in the only true and proper manner, my newly invented dish—the *cotelettes à la quadrille*. To attain this desirable end, I have caused a number of prospectuses to be printed—"

"Not under your own name?" interrupted Mr. Clayton.

"No—certainly not; but under that of Citron, which I have adopted, and which is painted over my shop. And as M. De Rosann was kind to me on several occasions, I do not doubt but that he will distribute these circulars amongst his friends."

"He is in England at this moment," said Mr. Clayton.

"So much the better!" cried Champignon: "perhaps he will be able to obtain the consent of some rich bankers or merchants to place their names on my list of shareholders."

"It is a joint-stock company, then?" observed Mr. Clayton.

"Precisely: and a very respectable list of names is already down on the subscription-book," returned Champignon, taking another roll of papers from his pocket.

"Have they all paid?—for ready money is the essential."

"O no; not yet. But I may have the cash when



I choose to write for it; as they are every one in situations where coin is of no use to them."

"They must be the King's ministers, at least, if that be the case," thought Mr. Clayton, in his own mind.

"Pray cast your eyes over the list," said Champignon, handing several sheets of paper tacked together to Mr. Clayton, who, according to the gastronome's wish, read as follows:—

"*Jean Beauvisage*, chevalier, one share of five hundred francs. *Le General Trotte-mal*, one share of a thousand francs. *Le Baron Feu-d'enfer*, two shares of a hundred francs each. *Le Comte Poussepain*, one share of five hundred francs. *Michel Cochon*, alias *Leger-de-main*, five shares of a hundred francs each. *Mathieu Vilain*, alias *Le Beau*, one share—but methinks, M. Champignon," cried Mr. Clayton, interrupting himself in the midst of the list, "that these names are somewhat singular; for instance, I see a little lower down, *Le Marquis de Bel-œil*, alias *Louche*, *Le Duc de Gros Nez*, *M. Polisson*, *M. Doux-doux*, surnamed *Le Voleur*, and a host of other nomenclatures, half with high titles, and half with extraordinary *aliases*."

"Ah! ah! you never would suspect the wit of that," cried Champignon.

"How? What do you mean? Is it possible there is a French duke named *Gros Nez*, or a French marquis called *Bel-œil*, alias *Louche*? Noblemen never have *aliases*: and if the Chamber of Peers be formed of individuals with such droll appellations, I should think the president must indulge in an occasionally hearty laugh when calling over their names. For instance, how singular would it appear, did the Duke of *Gros Nez* rise and say, 'After the excellent remarks that have just fallen from my friend the Marquis of *Bel-œil*, alias *Louche*, in answer to the misrepresentations made by the Baron *Feu-d'Enfer*, in reference to the amendment which the Count *Poussepain* is desirous of making to the bill,' &c., &c. It is



impossible, M. Champignon, that such titles can exist!"

"If they do not exist in the Chamber of Peers, I have heard them mentioned elsewhere," said Champignon, not at all discomfited by this attack on the veracity of his list.

"Where, in the name of God?" cried Mr. Clayton.

"At the galleys," answered the gastronomer, drily.

"It was there you met M. De Rosann, I suppose," exclaimed Mrs. Clayton, with a contemptuous sneer, while the unkind remark cut Eloise to the soul. Mr. Clayton noticed the effect it produced upon his niece, and hastened to get rid of Champignon, who had commenced a long explanation relative to the kindness of the convicts in promising to become purchasers of shares, and the use he made of these names and nick-names, some of which latter were titles, to ornament his list. Mr. Clayton cut him short, by promising to send his prospectus to De Rosann, and at length succeeded in conducting him as far as the street, where the gastronomer turned round, made two or three very low bows, and took his leave of Mr. Clayton with a thousand thanks for his kindness.

"Eloise, my love," said the kind uncle, when he had once more returned to the drawing-room, "I met this morning the interesting girl that you so particularly admired as a songstress the other day, and who sung Orlando's song so sweetly. She was better dressed than before, and was walking with a middle-aged peasant, who appeared to be her father. The sight of her put me in mind of the happy times when you and De Rosann were accustomed to mingle your voices together, and wile away many an hour with music."

"You do not think Eloise has renounced singing for ever, do you, William?" cried Mrs. Clayton somewhat angrily, as the name of De Rosann invariably called forth some harsh expression from her lips, although her usual manners were gentleness and benevolence in the extreme, and her ordinary behaviour towards her daughter kind and affectionate.



"I hope not," said Mr. Clayton. "But, methinks, that the harp and the piano have been sadly neglected lately."

"It is nearly a year since I touched either," murmured Eloise with a sigh. "Once I was devoted to music, as I was attached to drawing: but lately, the song has been neglected as much as the pencil—and sorrow and grief, and meditation, have occupied the time they usually employed."

These last words were said in a whisper; but Mrs. Clayton marked the cloud on her daughter's brow, and the tear in her eye, and hastened to change the conversation. Mr. Clayton was, however, obstinate; his mind could not be diverted from the topic that suddenly interested it; a sort of whim, or caprice, remained to be gratified; and he was not to be beaten off his track by the subterfuges of his sister-in-law, who vainly endeavoured to persuade him to continue *La Siège de la Rochelle*—one of Madame de Genlis' novels—which he was reading.

"I am in no humour to waste my time over a silly romance," cried Mr. Clayton. "It seems as if a year had made a sad difference in our little pleasures and amusements. Eloise, my love—do you think that you can recollect one of those sweet songs—"

"How obstinate you are, William!" interrupted Mrs. Clayton: "you are perfectly aware that I desired Eloise to assist me in this embroidery—and you still persist in attracting her attention to other matters."

"Eloise can very well devote an hour to her uncle," said Mr. Clayton, with an appealing glance to his beautiful niece.

"If you wish me to sing *La Portrait Charmant*, or my old English ballad of the 'Knights of Palestine'—which is so very long and so tedious—my dear uncle, I will gladly oblige you: but perhaps mamma is adverse to music this afternoon."

"On the contrary, my dear child," exclaimed Mrs. Clayton: "nothing would delight me more than to



hear your sweet voice joined to the harmony of one of your favourite instruments. I merely combatted your uncle's wishes for a moment, because I fancied that you yourself were unwilling to indulge us with an air."

Eloise accordingly drew a chair towards her harp, ran her delicate fingers lightly over the strings, then paused to recollect the words of a song which she had never warbled since the day of her lover's arrest under a terrible accusation; and, having convinced herself of the fidelity of her memory, she commenced the following air:—

#### LE PORTRAIT CHARMANT.

O beauteous counterpart of him I love,  
Delightful pledge of tenderness to me,  
Sent by thy lord, to say that I might prove,  
At least some solace in regarding thee!

There are the features that I once admired,  
The tender look, and loftiness of air;  
And when I pressed thee to my bosom, fired  
With hope, it seems as if himself were there.

But, oh! thou hast not half thy master's charms,  
Mute—passionless spectator of my wo:  
The joys we tasted in each other's arms,  
Rush to my mind and bid the tear-drops flow.

Extenuate my language, if severe—  
Forgive the wretchedness that fills my heart;  
And though thou dost but represent him here,  
Ever in thee I find his counterpart.

"Your voice has not lost its harmony, my dear Eloise, nor your memory its tenacity," cried Mr. Clayton, his countenance radiant with satisfaction, as the last words of this pathetic strain died away from his niece's lips.

"It is a sweet song, and exactly suited to your voice, Eloise," added Mrs. Clayton with a smile



expressive of contentment; for she fondly hoped that her daughter's sudden elevation of spirits was to be attributed to change of air and scenery.

“*Le Portrait Charmant*,” said Eloise, turning round her head towards her mother without quitting her seat, “is supposed to have been sung by Madame de Chateaubriand, when she received a piece of money on which was stamped the head of Francis the First.”

“True !” exclaimed Mr. Clayton. “And now, dear Eloise, as you have retained your chair, do oblige me with your other favourite song, as I am not certain of finding you in the same musical humour to-morrow, and am therefore desirous of profiting by the present occasion.”

“If I were as miserable as possible, uncle,” returned Eloise with the amiable *naïveté* so natural to an innocent maiden whose thoughts and whose actions are alike as pure as the hymns of cherubim, “I would always make an effort to please those I love :” and having uttered these words, she turned once more towards her harp, and sang the following singular air to the melody she extracted from the tightened cords of that delicious instrument.

## THE KNIGHTS OF PALESTINE.

### A LEGEND OF THE OLDEN TIME.

It was when the eventful day was done,  
That witnessed the capture of Ascalon,  
From the Moslem king by the Christians won,  
Who fought for the shrine of the Virgin's Son ;  
And when Phœbus' course to the west had run,  
And Cynthia's silent reign had begun,  
That out of the camp, attended by none,  
Towards the city walls rode an armèd one.



He stopped at the castle-postern straight,  
And tarried no moment to meditate,  
But knocked full hard at the massive gate;  
Nor long was the time that he had to wait,  
For a warder, appearing at the grate,  
Demanded who thither might come so late;  
When the knight replied, that affairs of weight  
Had brought him there with a need so great.

"Show me a sign, that I may obey,  
Else never, Sir Knight, will thou pass this way:  
Such are the orders none gainsay."

"—Shame to thy hair—thy locks so gray,  
If thou sendest me out in the night astray,  
When the sickly beams of the moon scarce play  
On the road where my journey back must lay."

"—Sir Knight, you will manage as best you may."

"—Of thy threats and thine orders all despite,  
Will I enter the gates this very night;  
Though the door be guarded by every sprite  
That avoids the earth in broad day-light,  
And in darkness comes to mortal sight.  
Against the legions of hell to fight,  
Were to me but a pastime of delight.  
Since it leads to Celestine," quoth the Knight.

Then the warrior turned to his charger there—  
He seized his mace and raised it in air:—  
The dint of its force he did not spare,  
But to deal the blow his arm 'gan prepare;—  
And, in sooth, the axe was of weight full rare;  
No delicate hand must that weapon bear:  
It fell with a din made the warder aware  
Of such warrior's prowess to have a care.

Loud thundered the mace—the door fell supine:—  
"Well aimed was that blow," said the warrior, "of mine!  
Now to the bower of the fair Celestine;—  
This feat has well earned her beauties divine;  
And, maiden, I'm come to revel in thine!  
Shall such charms in a gloomy tower decline,  
When thou may'st be led to the bridal shrine  
By the bravest chieftain in Palestine?"



The warrior he entered—the warder essayed  
To stop his proceedings—he sighed and he prayed ;  
But in vain his appeal and petition he made ;  
The Knight, so undaunted, could never be stayed  
By even the words that a foeman had said ;  
And his heart was now full of the beautiful maid  
Whom Nature with every charm had arrayed ;—  
So he turned from the warder, nothing dismayed.

But as he was going to seek the tower  
Where he knew Celestine slept in bower,  
(For now 'twas already midnight hour)  
A stately form, with an arm of power,  
Seized on the Knight, whose brow 'gan lower,  
And his eyes the fire of wrath to shower ;  
But the other exclaimed, “Thou well may'st cower,  
For thou ne'er shalt possess so lovely a flower.

“This day,” he continued, “the Moslem in vain  
His crescent against our red cross did sustain,  
And here I was sent these towers to maintain,  
Should the Saracen Soldan rally again.  
Wilt thou then arrive to disturb my reign,  
And seek for my daughter, whom never a stain  
Has sullied, to give me, her father, pain ?  
For she is betrothed to Sir Alberic Fayne.”

“— Little reck I for the happy one,  
Nor thee, the governor of Ascalon,  
Sent by the king when the siege was done,  
And these walls by Richard's arms were won :—  
But I will leave thee till morning's sun  
To illumine our hemisphere has begun ;  
And then, ere his mid-day course he run,  
Will I combat with that ephemeron.”

“— Sir Alberic Fayne will never fly,  
Though thou art so stalwart an enemy ;”  
('Twas thus the governor gave reply :)  
“But to-morrow's morn, if thou wilt try  
The joust to decide your rivalry,  
I swear by the Virgin, who rules on high,  
That Celestine herself, with her beauteous eye,  
Shall glance on the conqueror's victory.”



The morning's dawned, and the sun has lent  
His rays to enliven the tournament;  
Then, with their eyes on each other bent,  
And harnessed in steel with gilding blent,  
Both the knights to their stations went,  
And stood each before his own fair tent,  
Till the signal bugle its warning sent,  
When they charged, ere its latest sounds were spent.

Like falcon swift on an airy wing,  
They met with echoes thundering:—  
Their steeds the dust around them fling,  
And the crowds, with voices murmuring,  
Said they never had seen such chivalrous thing;  
For the lances broke at the sudden spring,  
And Sir Alberic Fayne lay in the ring—  
His victor was Richard himself—the King!

The vanquished was raised from his state supine,  
When Richard addressed the fair Celestine:—  
“Never, too dear one, shalt thou be mine—  
On him let your glances only shine;  
He's worthy, I ween, of such bliss divine,  
Since I, the victor of Palestine,  
Forgetting the rank of thee and thine,  
Were fain to have robbed thy virgin shrine.

“Thy father will tell thee, I came in the night,  
Like a robber who shuns the glare of day-light;  
I came like a south wind on blossoms bright,  
Fraught with intention to ravish and blight:—  
But now, though I've conquered thine own true knight,  
Though I love thee, sweet maiden, as much as man might,  
Still justice directs my heart aright,  
And to-morrow thy bridal shall speed in our sight.”

“Delightful!” cried Mr. Clayton, rising from his chair to imprint a kiss on the chaste brow of Eloise, whom he loved with all the tenderness usually manifested by a father towards a child. The amiable girl expressed the gratification she experienced in having pleased her uncle; and the day passed away more happily than any other since the fatal moment when



Alfred was first accused of a dreadful act of turpitude. Mrs. Clayton never demonstrated so much affection, nor showed so many instances of sincere love towards her innocent daughter before : and Eloise was half inclined to throw herself on her mother's bosom, and confess her permanent attachment to De Rosann, as well as the fact of their secret correspondence, when she received the caresses of a parent from whom she now withheld, for the first time in her life, the thoughts and reflections of her secret soul.

But she happily called to mind the injunctions of her uncle ; and satisfied her conscience with the conviction of acting under his sanction and auspices. She knew that he would be the last person in the world to mislead her—that his ideas of propriety would not permit him to suffer his niece to violate, in the slightest degree, the strict laws of decorum and female delicacy—and that he merely moderated by his indulgence the harsh decrees of her mother. With these impressions, Eloise calmed her agitated mind, and satisfied all her scruples, determining to follow her uncle's advice in this matter, and her mother's in every other—a compromise at which the most punctilious of our readers cannot express the smallest disapprobation, inasmuch as parental solicitude cannot always discriminate clearly in affairs so particularly connected with a child's present and future happiness.



## CHAPTER XI.

## A DEATH-BED.

“YOUR absence during a whole day is thus explained, M. De Rosann,” said Selina.

“And I have now given you a true and faithful account of the affair,” returned our hero. “I saw the surgeon, who attends Mr. Markham, this morning, and he assured me that his patient was already much better.”

“It is fortunate that thirty hours—or thereabout—can have worked such an improvement, being a tolerably convincing proof of the insignificance of the wound.”

“’Twas nothing but a mere scratch, Miss Robson,” remarked our hero, sitting uneasily on his chair; for he had called to make a certain explanation, which perhaps the reader may recollect he was resolved to do—and not to chatter on indifferent matters. He knew that the peace of mind of a young and pretty girl was at stake; and he hastened to acquit himself of a duty he owed her, her family, and himself. Disagreeable as was the task, it must nevertheless be performed—and with as little delay as possible. Selina herself furnished the opportunity.

“And have you no relatives—no friends, M. De Rosann, whom your death might have plunged into the deepest affliction?” inquired Selina with a shudder, as she contemplated the past possibility of such a lamentable event.

“There is no one in the world,” answered Alfred, a sigh escaping from his breast, “whose existence is so nearly coupled with mine, that my health and happiness are conditions of her own—that my tears would cause her’s to flow in abundance, and my smiles ani-



mate even her countenance with radiant joy. This being," continued our hero, not daring to look towards Selina, "is engaged to me by the most solemn and unchangeable vows; her heart is devotedly attached to him whose soul is entirely wrapped up in her. She is an angel of beauty, of chastity, and innocence—a maiden whose pure mind, like your's, Miss Robson, is unacquainted with guile—"

A convulsive sob interrupted this fervent but well-merited panegyric of the charms and the character of Eloise: De Rosann sprung hastily from his chair, and cursed his rashness in thus precipitately entering upon so tender a subject. Selina was white as marble—despair was depicted upon her countenance—not even the gigantic efforts of feminine modesty, reserve, and pride, could conceal the violence of her emotions—her bosom heaved convulsively—tears ran down her pale cheeks—her whole frame was suddenly paralysed with a sorrow—with a blow that made her motionless. At length she exerted all her force, recalled the small remnants of her broken courage, and hastily left the room. De Rosann did not offer to detain her: he stood petrified by the chair she had just left, uncertain how to act, undecided what course to pursue.

For five minutes did he thus remain in an attitude of pensiveness and thought, without having resolved upon taking any step to divest himself of the embarrassment of an unpleasant situation. In the midst of his reflections, the door of the apartment opened gently; and Selina again entered the room. Her face had lost nothing of its pallor—a deep melancholy had taken the place of the despairing expression it ere now had worn—and a forced, an unnatural tranquillity—a terrible calmness which made our hero shudder—betrayed the violence she was obliged to do her acutest feelings and sensibility. As she drew near to the spot where De Rosann was standing, stupified at the remarkable change ten minutes had been sufficient to work in the manners and the aspect of that young



lady, she endeavoured to smile; but the attempt was as vain as the essay of a departing sinner to assume a look of placid felicity or fearlessness. Alfred uttered not a word—he was too much shocked at the sad spectacle, to break a silence that appeared solemn and sacred. Selina noticed his embarrassment, and felt it her duty to terminate a scene that had betrayed her secret soul to him whom she tenderly loved.

“M. De Rosann,” said she in a low voice, “you must pardon and forget the events of this morning. It is useless for me to attempt to extenuate my folly by paltry excuses or subterfuges. Were I a child of sixteen or seventeen, I should probably think it incumbent upon me, and only consistent with female delicacy, to deceive you as to the causes of my past emotions. But the age of frivolity has gone by: you have always treated me more as the sensible woman, than the vain and coquetish girl: it is in the former light that I desire to be now regarded, and that I mean to express my sentiment. Listen for five minutes—I shall not detain you long—and then let us drop a veil over the occurrences of this morning, henceforth and forever?”

“O ! Selina—Miss Robson—have I then been the innocent cause of filling your heart with sorrow!” exclaimed our hero, tears running down his cheeks, for he could not contemplate the marble features of that once happy girl without emotion.

“Nay—Alfred—do not reproach yourself. I am alone to blame—and this confession of my weakness shall be my punishment. I have loved you, M. De Rosann—loved you from the first moment we met. Till I saw you, my heart had never known that passion—and at first I was unaware of its presence, still less of its ravages. I loved you—and a thousand innocent familiarities, which your position, as an intimate friend to the family, allowed you to practice, were foolishly perverted by my disordered imagination into proofs of a reciprocal regard. Did you press my hand by accident—did you call me by my Chris-



tian name in a moment of mirth—I immediately fancied your forgetfulness or absence to be signs of a tenderness mutually felt. 'Twas thus I deluded myself—'twas thus I nourished a flame to consume me—to devour my poor heart—to destroy my peace—to rob me of rest—to plant thorns in my path : and it is here, here," she added, placing her hand upon her breast, "that the serpent gnaws—that the flame burns—and that the unseen worm preys upon my vitals!"

"Selina—O Selina! am I the cause of this?"

"Yes—but unintentionally so : and when once I shall have unburthened my mind to you, De Rosann, I shall experience a certain peace—a repose which my lacerated heart requires. In all this I can attach no blame to you—'tis my own perverse destiny that has thus taught me to experience the miseries as well as the joys of life. Do you think that my journey, from my birth to my grave, is to pass amidst gay and smiling prospects? Oh ! no—I am not more unfortunate than the rest of mankind ! Deep as the impression now is—great as are the ravages that my luckless affection has made upon my mind, even in a period of three short weeks—time, and time only, will moderate the pain, if it cannot altogether eradicate the sting. And do not imagine that your presence will afflict me for the future: as long as you remain in the city, call upon us as usual, and we will be friends instead of—"

"Generous girl!" exclaimed De Rosann ; "Eloise could not be jealous of one whose disposition is so noble!"

"My ridiculous passion demanded a severe punishment," continued Selina : "and the awkwardness of my situation in being thus obliged to make an avowal which lacerates my heart, wounds my pride, and revolts against the purity of my sentiments, is an ample penalty for the levity of my conduct. You are a man of honour—you are upright and noble in your disposition—you have heard my sad confession—and you will not publish my secret to the world. Let it remain



in two memories only—let us each carry it to the tomb. And when you lead your destined bride to the altar, recollect, De Rosann, that there is one in the world who gives you her blessing, and who will offer up prayers for your future happiness. My heart is now relieved of a heavy load—I feel calmer than I have done for some days past—my feelings are less acute—my mind is less agitated. And now let me conclude with a prayer that you will not think the worse of me, for having been obliged to explain my emotions, and to unveil the secrets of my soul.”

“Think the worse of you, Miss Robson!” ejaculated our hero, astonished at the supposition. “I admire your character, and the mingled delicacy and firmness of your mind, the more I hear you speak, and the more I become acquainted with your thoughts. And, O! pardon the occasional levity, the frequent absence of mind, which have thus imposed upon you; and let me breathe a supplication to you not to imagine that I was wilfully guilty of an action the most cowardly and the most base! Had I never seen Eloise—or had I seen you first, Miss Robson—it might have been different: God only can look into the future—God only can judge of what would have happened;—the evil of to-day is sufficient for us to know.”

“Say no more upon the subject,” cried Selina: “let us give each other a promise of friendship—and I must endeavour to content myself with that chilling appellation of what I feel. From this moment forget the past—and persuade yourself that the adventures of the last hour are a dream—a baseless vision.”

“Farewell for the present,” said De Rosann, anxious to return home to compose the agitation of his mind: “and when next we meet, we encounter each other as friends. Adieu!”

On his return to his hotel, when he entered his sitting-room, he found a note lying upon the table. He hastily opened it, and read as follows:—

“A dying man, who is anxious to make his peace



with all his fellow-creatures, ere he quits this world of sin, implores M. De Rosann to visit him, if it be only for one minute, to smooth the pillow of a death-bed, and pardon the injuries he has received."

The address of the house whither De Rosann was thus invited, appeared at the bottom of this gloomy epistle; and our hero did not hesitate two minutes how to act. He hastily left the hotel, and hurried to the mansion where his presence appeared so necessary. The moment he mentioned his name, a servant in a handsome livery showed him to an apartment magnificently furnished, and desired him to have the kindness to wait for five minutes, in order that the sick man might be prepared to receive his visiter. Our hero obeyed; and although a secret presentiment told him who had sent for him, he was still anxious to be relieved of suspense. Presently the domestic returned, and requested De Rosann to follow him. They ascended a wide stair-case, and passed up a long gallery that led to the invalid's chamber. Alfred entered; and the servant closed the door upon him.

"Is that you, De Rosann," said a feeble voice, which our hero, as he had expected, recognised to be La Motte's; "and have you obeyed my summons, and condescended to visit the repentant sinner's death-bed?" Oh! how thankful—how deeply grateful I am!"

"La Motte," returned Alfred, in a solemn tone, "do not imagine that I have come to reproach—I am here to pardon you!"

"Is it possible, De Rosann, that you can forget the deep injuries I have done you?—your reputation tarnished—your establishment ruined—your fortune dissipated—yourself accused and condemned as a forger—"

"Ah! how did you become aware of that?" interrupted Alfred, suddenly.

"Four or five days ago, I met an individual whom I had once known in Paris—a person of the name of Belle-Rose, and he entrusted me with that which he called a great secret: he narrated to me all the igno-



miny you had suffered on my account. But he did not reveal the sad tidings till I had sworn that you and I were not friends, that the fact should never escape my lips in England, and that there was no chance of our conversing together."

"He did right," cried De Rosann.

"A sudden malady has seized upon me," said La Motte, "and will soon extinguish the vital spark with its vengeful breath. I feel that a just God is punishing me for my crimes. Alas! perhaps the agonies I now endure are only a foretaste of those I am destined to undergo in the regions where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched!"

"Console yourself, La Motte," whispered Alfred, in a kind tone; for he forgot at that awful moment all he had undergone through the treachery of the dying man.

"Say that you pardon me!" implored La Motte, large drops of perspiration falling from his forehead, and mingling with the repentant tears which he shed. "Say that you pardon me—and I may yet die in peace and comparative contentment."

"I pardon you from the bottom of my heart; I forget all—all you have made me suffer; I offer you the hand of friendship," cried the generous youth, grasping the emaciated fingers held out to him, "and I swear, as God is my judge, that I sincerely forgive you La Motte—oh! as sincerely as man can do."

"In my death I shall be more serviceable to you than I was in my lifetime, De Rosann," said La Motte, vainly endeavouring to stifle the convulsive sobs that nearly choked him, and that perpetually interrupted his conversation: "I have at length done you the justice I owe you. Since the fatal moment of my crime, I have scarcely known happiness, otherwise than as an empty name. My affectionate wife, who never suspected my guilt,—and in order to conceal it from her, I carefully avoided any correspondence with the continent, not even suffering a French journal to enter my house,—that devoted wo-



man fell a victim to the change of climate which my vices obliged her to endure, and left me alone in the world a few weeks after our arrival in England. Nor did my ill-gotten wealth profit me. It gradually disappeared in unfortunate speculations; and, as if I had not already suffered enough by my misdeeds, I was about to inveigle the worthy Mr. Robson to place his property in my power. You saved him from the precipice on which he stood. I left his house in shame and confusion; and, assembling the wreck of my riches, I entered into a bold speculation the very next day, determined to lose all and deprive myself of life, or by a desperate stroke to realize in eight-and-forty hours an immense sum, with which I might live happily in another clime. The foreign mail arrived—the funds rose to the astonishment of every body—and I hailed my success with unbounded joy. I then relinquished my idea of quitting the country, and thought of settling in a distant part of England, and thus avoiding the possibility of encountering men whose reproaches I had every reason to dread—I mean Robson and yourself. But the spirit of a gambler kept me in London; and I still pursued my desperate system of speculation, but with an unparalleled fortune. I was astonished at my own prosperity, and saw myself in a few days the possessor of more money than I had ever had at my disposal during an adventurous life. The excitement my mind had undergone threw me upon a sick bed, and other maladies have crowded fast upon me to rob me of existence.”

La Motte paused for a few moments, wiped his forehead, and continued in a feebler voice to the following effect:

“I feel that my last hour is approaching, and that the green sod will soon close over my coffin: perhaps there is not a soul in the world to drop a tear upon my tomb! This morning I sent for a lawyer and competent witnesses, and made my will. The contents of it, De Rosann, will prove that I deeply de-



plore my treachery towards you, and that on my death-bed I endeavour to make amends. You need not be afraid to accept the trifle I have left you,—it was honestly gained by my speculations on the Exchange. I have, moreover, drawn up a full and clear statement of the transaction by which your fair fame suffered. This has been signed by the French consul: the two documents will be found together after my death. Till then neither shall be opened. Suffice it to say, that your innocence will be fully established—and you may yet look your enemies in the face.”

“God knows, my motives in pardoning your offences towards me were not interested, La Motte,” cried De Rosann: “but I do not refuse the bounteous gifts you may have bequeathed me—because I am poor—I am a beggar, indeed—dependent on my friends.”

“And I have reduced you to so humiliating a predicament!” cried La Motte, covering his face with his hands, and weeping bitterly. “I have been the baneful cause of all your bitter tears—your moments of agony—your nights of torment—and your days of despair. Through my infernal machinations—but thought is dreadful—I dare not look at the past—retrospection is terrible! Oh! De Rosann—De Rosann—at length you are avenged—for you witness my tortures. Oh! oh!”

“I do not wish for vengeance,” said our hero, mildly.

“I know it, De Rosann—you have pardoned me! But I cannot yet pardon myself.”

The surgeon now entered the room, and proceeded to examine his patient’s pulse. The fever was considerably increased by the excitement of the last half hour; and an almost involuntary shake of the head, on the part of the medical man, convinced De Rosann that La Motte had but a short time to live. In the evening he rallied a little, and a hectic colour appeared on his cheeks; but towards midnight he suf-



ferred a relapse; and at two o'clock on the following morning he expired in the arms of the individual whom he had only a year ago ruined and reduced to the lowest pitch of degradation.

When La Motte's will was opened, De Rosann found himself the sudden heir to upwards of forty thousand pounds. He moreover inherited the possession of the furniture, valuables, carriages, horses, &c. In addition to these bequests, the sum of twelve thousand pounds was left to liquidate the amounts due to those discounters who had given cash upon the forged bills for which De Rosann suffered, in case their claims had not been already satisfied: and if they had received a portion, or the whole, of the money that was owing to them, from the product of the establishment when it became bankrupt, and was sold to other merchants, then the remainder, or entire sum of twelve thousand pounds, was to devolve to De Rosann as La Motte's heir. Fortunately for our hero, the sale of his ruined house had been entrusted to honest men; and subsequent inquiry proved that the creditors had been paid various dividends to the gross amount of seventy-five per cent. Nine thousand pounds of the twelve, thus equitably set apart by the repentant La Motte, were added to the other legacies; and no one congratulated De Rosann more sincerely on his unexpected good fortune than the worthy banker, and his daughter Selina.



## CHAPTER XII.

## THE DEPARTURE.

IN the same desk, which had contained the will of the penitent La Motte, was a sealed document addressed to De Rosann. This was the statement of the departed man relative to the circumstances attending the forgery, duly witnessed by two respectable housekeepers and by the French consul. De Rosann gladly possessed himself of this important deed, the contents of which he did not communicate even to Mr. Robson, for motives which scarcely require explanation. With Mrs. Clayton alone would the confession of La Motte's crimes be chiefly availing; and Alfred anticipated the pleasure he should experience when he presented himself before the conscientious mother, and produced the many recommendations he now bore in his favour, amongst which his sudden accession of wealth would not probably be the slightest.

A few days after the performance of the funeral obsequies of the deceased La Motte, our hero was surprised by a visit from Belle-Rose, whose shabby clothes, dirty appearance, and unchanged linen, betokened one of those sudden reverses of fortune to which the adventurer was far from unaccustomed. His hat was nevertheless still inclined to the right side two inches out of the perpendicular; and he endeavoured to make up by the increase of his swagger for the miserable appearance of his person.

"De Rosann—my dear fellow," cried Belle-Rose, throwing himself uninvited upon the sofa, and dirtying one of the cushions with his boot, "I understand you are in luck—a favourite of Madame Fortune—



while I am as poor as a peasant of Auvergne. 'Tis true, I could eat up all France and Navarre in six months, if any one would give me the chance. But that does not put guineas into my pocket; and I already owe a tolerable round sum to Markham."

"M. Belle-Rose," said Alfred, firmly, and in a severe tone of voice, "I thought that when we tacitly concluded our agreement—a compact you yourself suggested—"

"That we should remain mortal enemies, eh? Oh! no," interrupted Belle-Rose; "I entertain too sincere an affection for you to continue at warfare. *Peace! Peace!* is my motto, De Rosann. So give me your hand—and a little money in it, if you please; because I am miserably poor."

"For the last time, Belle-Rose, I will accede to your request," cried our hero, unlocking his writing-desk, and taking out some money: "but, remember, that this is absolutely the last time; and that if you call upon me again, I will sooner brave exposure at your hands than satisfy your rapacious demands. There are a hundred pounds at your service; take them, and let me see your face no more."

"Shall I give you my acknowledgment?" inquired Belle-Rose, coolly transferring the bank-notes from the table to his pocket.

"Idiot!" exclaimed Alfred: "do you think I ever wish you to pay me, even if you could?"

"You are perfectly right not to expect it," said the adventurer. "Good morning, my dear De Rosann; and be assured you possess my most undivided friendship."

With these words the *soi-disant* Count left the room; and in the afternoon the respectable inhabitants of the Quadrant were again gratified with the appearance of the little Frenchman, who sported more chains, was dressed in better style, and threw a greater swagger into his gait than ever.

De Rosann received satisfactory letters from St.



Malo, and laughed heartily at the contents of Champignon's prospectus; for he instantly recognised the nicknames and real appellations of many of the convicts at the *bagne*, who had made the poor gastronome their butt, and had puffed him up with promises to take shares in his concern. But the happy tidings, that Eloise gradually acquired health and spirits on account of the prospects her lover held out relative to his pardon and speedy return to France, to claim her hand of a parent whose obstacles he declared his ability to overcome, caused our hero to experience sentiments of pleasure and felicity which we cannot define. Those only who have combatted against the cruelty or the pride of parents, and who have met with severe repugnance to the attainment of a consent too long withheld, can appreciate the feelings of a fond lover when he sees fortune suddenly smiling upon him, his mistress tender and constant, and a more than probability of eventually conducting her a blushing bride, resplendent with beauty, animation, and joy, to the hymeneal altar.

Time wore on—about a month since the receipt of Leblond's letter elapsed—and that mysterious individual, faithful to his promise, sent De Rosann the anxiously-anticipated pardon. Our hero tore open the paper that enclosed it; and when his eyes caught the first words, "*Nous, Charles le dix, Roi de France et Navarre, avons ordonné et ordonnons ce qui suit,*" &c., &c.,\* and when he noticed the signature of the Minister of Justice at the bottom of the sovereign decree, he could not contain his joy; but with all his native vivacity he performed a thousand ridiculous antics, till he was ashamed of his very self, and began seriously to consider whether he had not lost his senses. The idea that he could now return to his

\* "We, Charles the Tenth, King of France and Navarre, have decreed and do decree that which follows," &c. This is the preamble of all royal mandates in France.



beloved country—that nothing farther detained him in England, and that he was at liberty to commence his journey back again to

“The chosen home of chivalry,  
And garden of romance,”

whenever he chose to order the post-chaise and bid adieu to his friends—the conviction that he was no longer a felon, nor a criminal in the eyes of his country's laws, and that the almost insuperable bar to his marriage with Eloise was probably overcome—these reflections caused his heart to leap within him, and he exclaimed aloud, “This moment is an ample reward for all the hours of agony and suffering I have undergone. Pardoned by my king, once more on a level with the proudest of my fellow-countrymen, possessing a competency to insure me bread for the future, and then Eloise—oh! indeed—indeed, this instant of bliss is as a drop of wine after cups of vinegar and gall!”

The following morning was fixed for his departure; and he determined to spend the last evening of his sojourn in the English metropolis with the kind friends to whom he was under a multiplicity of obligations. Having first informed Mr. Robson of his intentions, he ascended to the drawing-room, where—as if destiny had arranged the meeting on purpose—he found himself alone with Selina.

“No circumstances can this time make me change my mind, Miss Robson: my presence at St. Malo is absolutely necessary in a few days,” said our hero, when he had gradually unfolded the chief object of his visit to the being whom the sad news afflicted as much as they gave him pleasure.

“May all happiness attend you, M. De Rosann!” cried Selina, wiping away a tear. “May you reap the reward which your constancy deserves, and experience an uninterrupted felicity in the arms of your future bride.”



“And may you forget, Miss Robson, the image of the individual who has been unfortunate enough to cause you pain: may you be united to one capable of appreciating your worth, and of insuring you that domestic joy which your virtues and your disposition so essentially merit.”

“No, Alfred—M. De Rosann—I shall not seek a change like that to which you allude. My heart can never become the property of another; and where I cannot place my affections, there must I not hope for solace or consolation. ’Twould be a crime to engage in the holy bonds of matrimony—’twould be practising a cheat upon a confiding husband, to return his love with indifference.”

“May you not hope, Selina, that a year—eighteen months—”

“Can change my sentiments?” cried Miss Robson, hastily interrupting our hero, as if he were uttering a blasphemy: “O no, no. Were you better acquainted with my character—my disposition—you would not think so lightly of me as your remark proves you do; but you would pity the undying, the unquenchable flame that gnaws my suffering heart.”

“And yet you yourself said that time could haply work a change for the better,” observed De Rosann, alluding to the fatal day when the memorable explanation took place between himself and the unhappy maiden, whose misplaced affection was a scorpion her bosom had nourished to sting the most vital part.

“If I thought so at the moment, I was wrong: but I probably uttered the words you refer to with the idea of dispelling your fears for my health and happiness. Since the morning on which I discovered my terrible mistake, we have kept our vows, and have not again touched upon the melancholy topic. You are now going to leave me—you are about to be united to one whom you love—we shall be separated for ever—never more to meet in this world, unless by some strange accident, for it will be my duty to avoid you on ac-



count of your innocent wife, who must naturally experience a certain jealousy of her husband's female friends; and I did not think it a crime once more to unburthen my mind, and assure you of the constant esteem I shall entertain for you, although hundreds of miles may separate us. Do not question my natural delicacy in thus reviving a subject over which the veil of oblivion should have been for ever drawn; but pardon the weakness of a maiden condemned to sigh and to despair."

"My fatal reserve—my want of frankness in the first instance have caused these sufferings; and never shall I cease to reproach my injustice and my folly as the origin of an amiable woman's sorrows."

"If you persist in thus accusing yourself, you will only add to my unhappiness; whereas, did I know that you feel an inward conviction, a secret certainty of your innocence, I should be contented. Promise me, then, M. De Rosann—Alfred—that you will not blame—"

"Not blame myself, Selina!" cried De Rosann, his heart bleeding at the agony he saw depicted on the countenance of the noble-minded girl: "only name your wishes—tell me to vituperate my conduct—or to accuse no one—to consider all unoffending—and I will obey you!"

"Accuse no one, then," said Selina, repeating De Rosann's words: "and forget that we have ever revived the subject—or rather the subject itself: henceforth be it no more a reminiscence to which you can even refer, so that the thought may cause you neither pain nor remorse."

The entrance of Mrs. Robson and Mary put an end to the embarrassment of De Rosann and the melancholy disclosures of Selina. When the banker's wife was informed of Alfred's speedy departure, and of the very next morning being fixed upon as the day, she could scarcely conceal an expression of sorrow or disappointment; for she fondly anticipated, that "the handsome



young Frenchman would have proposed to her younger daughter;" and since he had succeeded to the wealth of the late La Motte, she had been particularly anxious to retain him in her family as a son-in-law. But the worthy lady was doomed to see her *Chateaux en Espagne* levelled in an instant.

When Mr. Robson entered the room, his disappointed spouse drew him aside, and whispered in his ear, "So M. De Rosann is decided on leaving London to-morrow morning?"

"Yes, my love."

"And he has not proposed to Selina," continued the good lady.

"No, my love."

"Do you not think it rather strange?" inquired Mrs. Robson.

"Not at all, my love."

"I wish you would not *love* me quite so much, Mr. Robson; but give yourself the trouble to be a little more explicit."

"On what subject?" demanded the banker calmly.

"Relative to M. De Rosann's conduct," returned Mrs. Robson.

"What has he done?"

"What has he not done? you mean. After all his flirtation with Selina—after all his marked attention to her—and after all the kindness he has experienced at this house, he has not proposed, and he purposes leaving to-morrow morning."

"Now I can be explicit, my dear," said Mr. Robson with the same provoking calmness, which added to his wife's irritation. "M. De Rosann, as you told me yourself, danced twice with Selina at the house of our friends the Wentworths—that was not flirtation. M. De Rosann has paid more attention to Selina than to Mary, or any other lady whom he may have met here, because she understands French, and because he cannot speak two words of English—that is not marked attention. And with regard to the kind-



ness we have had it in our power to show him, a few dinners, &c., &c., are not a very considerable return for the service he rendered your husband, Mrs. Robson, in putting an end to that husband's speculative views with regard to Lebrun or La Motte. Therefore, in every point you are entirely refuted; and allow me to request you not only to forget these silly notions of your's, but also to pay my friend M. De Rosann the usual attention he has been accustomed to receive at my table."

These words were spoken with a firmness that exhibited a determination on Mr. Robson's part to be obeyed; and the discomfited lady returned to the drawing-room in anything rather than a good humour.

The evening passed away gloomily and sadly. Selina spoke but little—the banker himself was out of spirits—and Alfred felt an oppression for which he could not account. Mary was sorry to lose "so handsome a *chaperon*" to their morning promenades, as De Rosann—and her mother could not conceal her ill-temper at the disappointment she had experienced. At length the clock struck eleven—and our hero rose to depart. He took his leave of the excellent Mr. Robson with unfeigned regret, he thanked him and Mrs. Robson for all their kindness toward him, and promised to write as soon as he should have arrived at Paris. He then bade adieu to Mary more with politeness than regret—and turned to Selina. Her cheek was death-like pale, but no tears dimmed her eyes—her countenance wore rather the expression of despair than of melancholy. He took her trembling hand, and wished her all happiness—she endeavoured to reply—her tongue clave to the roof of her mouth—and her emotions were visible to all present. That instant revealed her secret—the quick glance of her parents and sister detected her unrequited love, and marked her looks, in which was depicted an intensity of agony. "Farewell!" cried De Rosann once more; an almost inaudible "Adieu!" was returned—he re-



linquished the burning hand that was clasped in his, and rushed out of the room, glad to escape the severe necessity of beholding Selina's wo, of which he himself was the innocent cause.

De Rosann had ordered the post-chaise to be ready at ten o'clock on the following morning. He packed up his various papers with the most particular attention, arranged everything ready for his departure, and lay down to rest—but not to sleep. At one moment the image of Selina haunted his fancy ; and at another the anticipated happiness he promised himself on his arrival at St. Malo, drove away all inclination to slumber. It was not till nearly daylight that he closed his eyes in forgetfulness of his present good fortune and his past miseries ; perhaps even then they followed him in his dreams.

When he awoke, he found a waiter of the hotel standing by his bed-side with a letter in his hands. Our hero hastily tore it open ; he recognised the handwriting of Leblond, and as speedily perused its contents, which obliged him to counter-order the post-chaise for a few hours. Leblond's epistle was short, and neither welcome nor disagreeable. It merely stated, that as De Rosann would doubtless quit London immediately, even if he had not already left, he might call at a certain mercantile house in the city, and take charge of a considerable sum of money, in bills of exchange and cheques upon Paris, which Leblond gave him authority to receive. This sum was doubtless destined for the service of those invisible powers whose intrigues extended even to a foreign land ; and De Rosann did not hesitate a moment what course to pursue. Leblond declared he should have mentioned the circumstance in his letter which accompanied the king's pardon, and which Alfred had received the day before, had it not slipped his memory as he wrote in a hurry. He concluded by desiring our hero not to linger more than possible on his journey to Paris, and to call at the Rue de la Chanoinesse the moment he arrived in that city.



De Rosann threw the letter upon the table near the bed, and hastily performed his toilet, in order to lose no time ere he started for Southampton, whence it was his intention to embark on board a steam-vessel bound to Havre. He threw himself into a hackney-coach, and desired the driver to take him to an address, that he named, in the city. The obsequious Jarvey whipped his two miserable animals, which he was pleased to dignify by the title of *horses*, and the vehicle flew along the Strand at a quicker rate than ordinarily distinguishes carriages of the kind. And here we may observe, *en passant*, that if the English hackney-coachmen and omnibus-cads were only one quarter as civil as the individuals who fill similar distinguished situations in France, the magistrates of Bow-street, Hatton-garden, &c., would leave the official benches half an hour earlier every day, to their especial contentment, and to the annoyance of the proprietors of *Bell's Life in London* and the *Weekly Despatch*, the columns of which journals are invariably filled with police-reports wherein the myrmidons of Shillibeer generally figure to advantage.

On account of certain formalities to be filled up, and certain unavoidable delays, upon which it is not our intention to dwell, De Rosann could not receive the money until four o'clock in the afternoon, when he was obliged to proceed to the city a second time to fetch it and sign a receipt. But in the interval between his two visits, we must notice that a gentleman honoured our hero with a call, and, not finding him at home, took the trouble to wait at least a quarter of an hour, expecting his return. De Rosann questioned the waiter as to the age, dress, and principal characteristics of the person who had exhibited such uncommon politeness, and found, by the answers he received to his inquiries, that the individual in question could have been no other than Belle-Rose. The waiter, moreover, added, that the visiter appeared astonished when he was informed of De Rosann's



intended departure. Our hero concluded that his former companion was once more pushed for a little ready money, and he made all possible haste to leave the hotel before the self-styled Count might take it into his head to call again. But despite of all his despatch it was past seven o'clock in the evening before he ascended the steps of the post-chaise that was to bear him away from London.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE JOURNEY.

It was ten o'clock before De Rosann arrived at Bagshot. The night was stormy and tempestuous; the wind howled fearfully along the dismal road which runs across the heath; the rain pattered against the windows of the post-chaise with the force of hail-stones; the moon was concealed by dense clouds; not a star appeared upon the face of heaven; all was dark and sombre. When the blast blew violently, it resembled the rush of a mighty torrent; and when its vigour relaxed at intervals, it seemed like the agonizing groans of a human being ere his life be rendered up to the ferocity of the murderer. The lamps of the carriage threw but a partial and glimmering light a few paces in front: the thunder rolled occasionally over-head with awful din; and the lightning, from time to time, broke upon the obscurity of nature in vivid flashes, as evanescent as they were bright. Still De Rosann did not repent having left London during such weather: he was anxious to return to his native land, and ascertain the fate that awaited him, according to the decision which Eloise's mother should pronounce, and which he had every reason to hope would be favourable.



At Bagshot, De Rosann opened the window of the post-chaise for a moment, and called the postilion to the door. He did not attempt to make him understand his meaning by mere words, because, of all people in the world, an English post-boy is about the last whom a rational being would expect to speak French : but money has a persuasive eloquence peculiar to itself ; and an extra half-crown, paid beforehand, on this occasion produced the desired effect. Our hero saw that his wishes were comprehended ; and, having drawn up the blinds, he endeavoured to compose himself to sleep, while the postilion whipped his spirited horses, and urged them to such a pace that Alfred could not reproach himself for having expended coin in vain.

Immediately out of Bagshot, which lies in a valley, the road ascends a steep hill. Up this acclivity dashed the chaise drawn by two animals, on whose tender sides the spur and the lash were not used fruitlessly. The brow was passed ; and the descent was made at the same rapid rate, as if life were unrecked for, and speed alone regarded. Alfred felt a momentary alarm at so extraordinary a celerity ; but he did not choose to exhibit his nervous fears by desiring the postilion to relax from that pace which he himself had encouraged with his munificence. The level piece of ground to which they had now arrived, a mile before the entrance of the town of Blackwater, was scarcely touched by the hoofs of the horses as they galloped over it like grey-hounds stretching across the plain, bearing the carriage in their rear as if it were a thing of no weight. In the meantime the flashes of lightning gradually became more frequent and more vivid ; the thunder broke forth with deafening peals ; the violence of the rain increased ; and the murmuring of the wind as rapidly abated to a comparative tranquillity. Faster and faster flew the met-tled steeds—their iron-shod heels struck fire even on a road deluged with water—but the crack of the postilion's whip was heard no longer. Trusting too



confidently to the vigour of his arm, and to the supposed command he had over his horses, he had given the high-spirited animals a larger scope than they were accustomed to enjoy—their loosened bridles had relaxed the galling of the bit—and the lightning terrified them by its repeated glare.

When too late, the postilion discovered his imprudence. The horses obeyed his voice as much as the ocean regards the charm of the Norwegian mariner, who whistles to reduce it to silence and to calmness. De Rosann soon perceived the effect of his inauspicious liberality, and did not then hesitate to call to the postilion to arrest the progress of the flying animals. His shouts only terrified them the more, and increased their speed. The carriage traced an uneven passage along the road—it oscillated from side to side with dreadful jerks—and occasionally threatened to overturn, as one wheel sunk deeply into the mud, and the other passed upon a heap of stones. De Rosann was jolted, first to the right and then to the left; the windows rattled as if they would break; and the chain, to which the skid was attached, clanked backwards and forwards to increase the discordant clamour.

The town of Blackwater was traversed with the rapidity of the flight of an arrow shot from the bow by the arm of a strong archer: the pavement echoed a moment to the hoofs of the horses, and the sound was lost upon the murmuring blast as though it had not been. It was then the spirited animals relaxed their ardour, and gradually reduced their pace to one of less celerity. There is, on the farther side from London of Blackwater, a high hill immediately before the road opens upon the wide common called Harford Flats. This ascent was made with a still decreasing speed, and when the vehicle arrived at the summit, the horses, beaten by their own exertions, spontaneously stopped to recover breath. Alfred was about to reproach the post-boy for his rashness in thus suffering himself to be mastered by steeds whose mettle was not to be idly tampered with: but he



checked himself in time to recollect that the vituperation he meditated would not come within the limits of that individual's comprehension. He however caused the door to be opened, and descended to examine the chaise, in order to ascertain if the linch-pins were in their places, and if the wheels had experienced any damage.

While he was thus engaged, the distant sounds of horses' hoofs met his ears; and in the course of a minute three men, mounted on "stalworth chargers," galloped up to the spot where the post-chaise was standing. Instead of passing by, they suddenly halted, and, with one accord, leaped to the ground. Alfred started from the stooping posture in which he was bent towards the box of one of the wheels, the moment he heard that simultaneous movement on the part of the strangers; and a suspicion of their design instantly flashed across his mind. He made a rush toward the door of the chaise, in order to seize his pistols; but, as if his aim were anticipated, the foremost of the three robbers threw himself between our hero and the carriage, while a second pinioned his arms behind him. The third ran forward to secure the postilion; he, however, searched in vain; that wary individual had slipped away the instant he perceived the vile intentions of the three travellers.

De Rosann made a desperate effort to disengage himself from the vigorous grasp that had assailed him; and, by a turn more dexterous than powerful, he once more regained the freedom of his arms. To dash aside the man who had intervened between himself and the carriage, was the work of an instant, and the robber fell so heavily against one of the wheels, that he rolled senseless to the ground, apparently stunned by the sudden blow. Our hero's pistols were on the seat of the carriage; the door was open, and the step was down. He leapt lightly up, and succeeded in securing the loaded weapons ere he was again attacked. All this was the work of a second: but before he had time to turn and confront his ene-



mies, he was tripped up from behind, and levelled with the ground as he attempted to descend from the first step of the carriage whereon he had mounted to reach his pistols, one of which exploded as he fell.

No sooner was De Rosann thus powerless on the muddy road, than one of the two robbers who remained capable of acting—for the other was still senseless—leaped upon our hero to prevent him from rising, and presented a large clasp-knife to the back of his neck, touching the skin with the point, and instantly withdrawing it, not from motives of cruelty, but merely to show the vicinity of the murderous weapon. The companion of the man thus employed in acting as sentry over De Rosann, proceeded to examine the carriage, and, for that purpose, he detached one of the lanterns hanging in front. No sooner did the lamp move from its place, than Alfred felt himself suddenly relieved of the load from his back, and, starting up, he ascertained, by the glimmering rays of light, that the robber who had kept him down was struggling in the vigorous grasp of the postilion. De Rosann lost not a minute, but rushed upon the remaining highwayman who was about to commence his examination of the carriage, and levelled him to the ground with a blow of the pistol which had exploded. He then relieved the postilion of his charge, by tying the robber's arms and legs with some cordage he hastily cut from one of his trunks, and, rolling him into a dry ditch at the side of the road whither the post-boy had at first retired for refuge, and whence he had emerged when a favourable opportunity of putting an end to the combat presented itself. That opportunity was discovered by the rays of the lantern which was detached from its place to aid the thief in the investigation of the baggage, as detailed above.

Our hero was about to jump into the chaise and continue his journey, when one of the robbers, that lay stretched upon the road, gave a loud groan. De Rosann seized the lantern from the hands of the pos-



tilion, who was going to restore it to its place, and drew near to assist the sufferer. The exclamation issued from the individual De Rosann had thrown against the wheel. When the rays of the feeble light fell upon the pale countenance of the fallen man, Alfred uttered a cry of surprise and horror—for he recognised the features of his ancient antagonist Markham!

A sudden idea struck the mind of our hero. Belle-Rose had called upon him in the morning, and had remained a quarter of an hour in the room he occupied at the hotel, where Leblond's letter was lying open upon the table. No sooner did De Rosann recall these circumstances to his memory, than he ran to the second robber, who lay senseless upon the ground, approached the lamp to his face, and, as he had anticipated, discovered his former companion Belle-Rose! He did not stay to trouble himself about the third—but, horror-stricken at the dreadful events which had just happened, and trembling for the future fate of his miserable fellow-countryman, he leapt into the carriage, and was soon far away from the spot where the combat had taken place. He did not forget to thank the Almighty that no blood had been spilt, and that he had so narrowly escaped being despoiled of his most valuable possessions.

“Had the miserable wretches succeeded in this vile attempt,” said De Rosann to himself, as the post-chaise rolled onward, “I should have been undone forever. The treasure with which I am entrusted would be now in their possession; and my tale would stand but a poor chance of pacifying the owners of those riches on my arrival at Paris. But fortune is wearied of tormenting me; and has doubtless turned her capricious resentment against other unhappy beings, who at this moment are deploring her harshness. And to such a degraded abyss of infamy is Belle-Rose reduced! He, that only a few weeks ago was proud of his comparative guiltlessness when put in competition with the turpitude of other men,—he,



that boasted of never having been obliged to plunder the nightly traveller, and that despised the adventurous highwayman and assassin—he is fallen to a level with the vilest of robbers and miscreants. O what a change can a short period work in the minds and pursuits of human beings! And, alas! what charms can temptation assume, what alluring habits hold out? It is too late—or I would still endeavour to snatch the unfortunate votary of dissipation and debauchery, from the precipice on which he stands, and procure him an honourable employment. But it is useless!”

De Rosann arrived at Southampton without any other adventure worth relating, and was not a little grieved when he found that the captain of the steam-vessel did not dare to put out to sea, on account of the inclemency of the weather. Our hero was therefore constrained to wait three or four days in a town where he was a perfect stranger; and solace himself as well as he was able with the contents of an old French romance which he picked up at a circulating library.

On the morning of the fifth day the wind had so much abated, that De Rosann was enabled to embark. After a tolerable passage, during which he was nevertheless a sad victim to that dreadful but transitory malady—sea-sickness, he landed in safety at Havre, and immediately hired a carriage to take him to St. Malo.

His heart leaped within him as he once more breathed the air of his native France,—the land of his forefathers; and he felt proud of being again recognised by his government as a free citizen of the country that had produced whole armies of heroes to adorn with undying names the pages of history. There is not a nation in the world more patriotic than the French. The English mistake their own common national prejudices and bigotted adoration of institutions they scarcely comprehend, for a true patriotism; whereas pride alone is the origin of their blind love. A Frenchman understands his own feelings better;



he never asserts "that all is perfect" on his native soil; he will fight for it—he will praise it—and at the same time he will confess the perfections or admit the superiority of certain laws, habits, or systems, prevalent or existing in other climes. The Frenchman argues with warmth, energy, and action; but he does not forget the rules of logic, or the dictates of reason: the Englishman contents himself by saying "It is so, because he knows it—" and fancies he has destroyed the whole fabric of controversy erected by his opponent.

While the horses were being harnessed to the carriage, De Rosann amused himself with a Paris daily paper that was lying upon the table in the coffee-room of the inn. It was the *Constitutionnel* over which he thus accidentally cast his eyes; and an article, wherein this celebrated journal\* endeavoured to refute the assertions of an opposition contemporary, immediately rivetted our hero's attention to the subject. Subtle and plausible as were the arguments made use of by the *Constitutionnel*, the severe truths it attempted to contradict were but too palpable to the meanest capacity. The opposition paper totally exposed the rash measures practised by the existing ministry, and hinted broadly at the probable result. It was evident, according to the exposure thus made of many of the impolitic schemes of Polignac and his associates in office, that the throne of the royal Bourbons was tottering, that the cry of an enslaved nation would shortly alarm the imprudent Charles in his palace at St. Cloud, and that the public feeling was labouring under a strong excitement. De Rosann sighed when he reflected how another popular tumult might again prepare consular seats for new Robespierres, Dantons, and a host of petty tyrants—he feared lest the head of the hydra being cut off, a mul-

\* A year after the establishment of the *Constitutionnel*, its circulation amounted to the almost incredible number of twenty-eight thousand per diem. At the present moment, it is scarcely twelve.



tiplicity of others might spring up in its place—but he acknowledged within himself that France could not submit her proud head to an unworthy yoke, and that her sons must be free!

Our hero's reflections were interrupted by the entrance of the hostler, who informed him that the post-chaise was in readiness, and was waiting for him. De Rosann forgot the *Constitutionnel*, Polignac, Peyronnet, and the probable crisis that was at hand, and instantly obeyed the welcome summons—for his anxiety to embrace his beloved Eloise may naturally be imagined. And if our reader have ever been placed in a similar situation, let him call to mind his own feelings, and judge by them of the mingled hope and fear—expectation and alarm—which Alfred felt when the wheels of the carriage rolled upon the pavement of St. Malo. He desired the postilion to conduct him to the hotel he and Belle-Rose had patronised the last time he visited that sea-port, and soon descended in the court-yard of the inn amidst the salutations of landlord, waiter, and chamber-maid.

“Apparently *Monsieur* has not irretrievably forgotten us,” said the host, as he assisted De Rosann to alight. “I recollected the extraordinary handsome features of *Monsieur* instantaneously the carriage stopped at our gate; and I unfeignedly hope *Monsieur* has satisfactorily performed his arduously undertaken and suddenly resolved-upon journey to England.”

“Thank you—thank you!” cried our hero by way of answer to the jargon of the landlord. “Hasten and cut the cords of those trunks—I must see them conveyed to my bed-chamber before I leave.”

“Leave!” exclaimed the *maitre d'hotel*. “Indubitably *Monsieur* must immediately partake of some speedily-prepared refreshment.”

“No—in an hour or two—for God's sake, use despatch with that baggage—I have a call to make first,” replied De Rosann, vainly endeavouring to escape from fresh importunities.

“A call to make!” persisted the landlord in a strain



that would have wearied the patience of even a Job or a martyr: "that is indisputably a duty on infinitely numerous occasions; but decidedly when a gentleman has necessitatedly passed many wearily tiresome hours in a post-chaise, he should evidently first seriously occupy himself about his dinner."

"*Parbleu!* arrange it as you like," cried De Rosann, anxious to avoid a farther discussion with the provoking landlord. "I must call first on a family—the family of Mrs. Clayton—do you know the name—it is English?"

"So inconceivably short is my memory," returned the host, "that affairs indispensably—"

"I know the family this gentleman alludes to," interrupted the porter: "the lady and gentleman, whose daughter died the day before yesterday."

"Died!" exclaimed Alfred, a cold perspiration running down his forehead. "A young lady of the name of Clayton?"

"Yes—Playton—that is the name," rejoined the porter.

"One whom fame loudly reports to have been an extraordinarily renowned actress," said the landlord. "It is unanswerably proved that she had three illegitimately begotten children—"

"Thank God!" cried De Rosann, relieved from a sudden and terrible fear, while the host and the porter wondered why he should express his gratitude to Providence because the deceased actress had been guilty of a breach of continence and chastity, and had left behind her living proofs of her frailty.

"Yes—God is undubitably to be thanked," added the obsequious landlord, determined not to differ in opinion with his guest, "for having mercifully taken the life of the young lady, before she rapidly peopled the town with children infamously conceived."

The trunks were at length lifted from the post-chaise, and carried by De Rosann's orders to the apartment he was destined to occupy according to the directions of the landlord. Our hero hastily changed



his clothes, and performed his toilet; and, having consigned certain documents to his pocket, he sallied forth to call upon his beloved Eloise. The porter of the hotel was soon found to conduct him to the house where he anticipated to hear pronounced the final *fiat* that should stamp his happiness or his misery, and divest him of suspense. But the fears were few, and the hopes were many and sanguine that filled the breast of our hero, as he hurried along the street towards the dwelling he was so anxious to reach.

“Now,” thought he to himself, as he knocked at the door and dismissed the porter back again to the hotel,—“now let me reap a reward for all my past sufferings, or find that I have laboured fruitlessly and in vain!”

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### UNWELCOME NEWS.

WHEN Belle-Rose came to himself, and partially recovered his senses, he felt a dreadful chill, which had taken possession of his whole body. At first he was at a loss to ascertain where he was; but as his scattered ideas gradually concentrated and furnished his memory with the power of reflection, he called to mind all that had passed; and instead of repenting of the daring deed he had contemplated, he vented his indignation in curses against its failure. The night was pitch dark—the rain still fell in torrents—the wind alone had abated in violence. A sudden flash of lightning enabled him to judge of the result of the combat. The post-chaise had disappeared; one of his comrades lay stretched upon the ground; the other was nowhere to be seen. But their horses were standing tranquilly in the middle of the road, overcome



with terror, and not daring to move from the spot. The joy of Belle-Rose was great when he thus perceived means of escape so near at hand; for he suspected that De Rosann would return with aid to capture himself and his two companions; he therefore sprang upon the back of one of the trembling steeds, and departed at full gallop towards London, heedless of the cries which escaped from the unfortunate wretch whom De Rosann had bound hand and foot and cast into the dry ditch, and who set up a most plaintive yell when he heard Belle-Rose rise from the ground and mutter audible curses on account of the unsuccessful enterprise that thus had allured him from a warm bed, and exposed his person to the inclemency of the weather.

At about four o'clock in the morning, the self-styled Count entered the metropolis, and returned to the hotel at which he resided. His clothes were covered with mud; his face was disfigured with scratches and bruises acquired during his scuffle with the postilion, and his appearance altogether afforded a sorry spectacle. Luckily the porter who opened the door to him had no light in his hand; and being accustomed to attend such summonses at all hours, he did not make any particular remark. Belle-Rose, too glad to have thus escaped detection, and felicitating himself at having avoided the observation of impertinent curiosity, retired to his chamber, where he soon forgot in the arms of sleep the failure of his nocturnal enterprise.

But when he awoke, at about nine o'clock, an unpleasant reminiscence returned to his memory, and caused him to make a horrible grimace as his eye caught sight of a long slip of paper lying upon the table. The day before—to the uncommon surprise of the adventurer Belle-Rose, who “did not understand such treatment towards a gentleman of rank,” as he expressed himself upon the occasion—the landlord of the hotel had had the impudence, according to his guest’s ideas, to present his bill for the thirteenth time, and request immediate payment. Belle-Rose,



who had never thought of liquidating this long-standing account with any of the various monies he had obtained by gambling, by trickery, or at the hands of our hero and Mr. Robson, put off the settlement till the next day; and when the proprietor of the inn protested against a repetition of such idle promises, the *soi-disant* Count kicked him out of the room, and, by the same process, aided him to descend the stairs somewhat quicker than he had mounted them. The host was very indignant at such treatment, and threatened to complain to a police-magistrate; but Belle-Rose pacified his wrath, and pledged his honour as a "French nobleman," that the bill should be duly paid on the following morning.

To procure funds for this purpose, the shameless fellow did not hesitate to call once more upon De Rosann, to solicit that which he was pleased to dignify by the respectable appellation of *loan* instead of *gift*. Alfred was not however at home; and Belle-Rose resolved to wait for him. He lounged in and out of the two chambers which were occupied by our hero, and which communicated with one another; and at length his eye caught sight of Leblond's letter and Champignon's prospectus. He hastily perused the former, and immediately resolved to essay a daring measure to possess himself of the treasure entrusted to De Rosann. He then glanced hastily on the latter, and laughed heartily at the schemes of the gastronome; for he could not fail to recognise the invention of Champignon's fertile genius, although the prospectus purported to have been put forth by an individual bearing the appellation of Citron, which, as our readers will please to recollect, was the *nom de guerre* adopted by the "best cook in Europe" when he opened his shop at St. Malo.

No sooner had Belle-Rose entertained the nefarious idea of robbing De Rosann on the highway, during a journey which the waiter had already informed the self-dubbed Count our hero projected, than he resolved not to tarry any longer in expectation of Alfred's re-



turn, he therefore immediately departed to lay the foundation of the plan. Markham was easily gained over as an accomplice; and another of their abandoned associates was enlisted in the same service. The reader is already acquainted with the failure and result of the scheme.

Scarcely had Belle-Rose completed a hasty toilet, when the landlord entered his room, and requested the fulfilment of the promise so solemnly given the day before.

"You are in a dreadful hurry, my worthy friend," said Belle-Rose, recovering his presence of mind, and speaking with his usual coolness: "cannot you wait till I have called upon my banker—"

"That is the old excuse, M. d'Elsigny," returned the obstinate landlord, evincing a dogged resolution not to be idly made the butt of his guest's disposition for trifling any longer.

"How? the old excuse!" exclaimed Belle-Rose, affecting an angry excitement which he did not feel; "I went out yesterday to fetch the money to liquidate my bill; and falling in with my friend Markham, I entirely forgot it."

"You have broken your word, then; and a man of honour, as you pretend to be, should avoid subjecting himself to an accusation of telling an untruth."

"I have *not* broken my word—nor do I intend to do so," returned Belle-Rose. "The character of the Count d'Elsigny must never be impugned with impunity. I promise to settle your account this morning. Before twelve o'clock the money shall be produced in this very room."

"If I could rely upon your word—"

"Incredulous wretch!" exclaimed Belle-Rose, pretending to get into a passion, "go and draw the money yourself, if you choose."

"I will trust you once more, M. d'Elsigny," cried the landlord, scarcely knowing what step to take, and thinking that his noble guest could scarcely fail to



fulfil a promise so solemnly given for the fourteenth time, particularly when his honour "as a French nobleman" was at stake.

"And you are a great fool for your pains," said Belle-Rose when the proprietor of the hotel had left the room puffed up with hopes as false as they were threadbare.

Belle-Rose rang the bell and ordered his breakfast. He made a hearty meal, and then determined to do that which he had meditated for some time past, and which, sooner or later, must inevitably have concluded his London career, *viz.*, to decamp. In France a Frenchman\* can only be arrested upon a bill of exchange, made payable at one town and drawn at another; in England the liberty of the subject was not lately so much regarded by the unsaintly hand of the sheriff's officer. Belle-Rose knew this, and felt convinced that the patience of his landlord was now nearly exhausted; he therefore put the little money he could command in his pocket, made a bundle of a few shirts and other necessities; and enveloping himself in his handsome cloak lined with sables, although the morning was fine and sunny, he sallied forth to seek new adventures, and return to his native land, declaring, as he bent his steps towards the Universal Coach Office in Piccadilly, "That, after all, France was the only country fit for a gentleman to reside in!"

While the unsuspecting landlord was anxiously waiting for the return of the *soi-disant* Count, as he had "a sum to make up," the crafty Belle-Rose was comfortably seated on the outside of the Eagle coach, on his way to Dover, where he arrived without any accident the same evening. At six o'clock the next morning he embarked on board a sailing-vessel bound for Calais, the wind being too high and the sea too boisterous to allow the steam-boats to venture the

\* A foreigner, not domiciled by act nor naturalized in France, can be arrested for a book-debt; but not upon the mere oath of the creditor, who is obliged to prove the justice of his claim before his writ is granted.



transition. At Calais he caused his passport to be duly signed, according to the usual formalities, and secured a place in the diligence for Abbeville, having already made up his mind how to act in order to obtain a little supply of ready money to commence his career once more at Paris. From Abbeville he proceeded to Dieppe, thence to Havre-de-Grace, and lastly to St. Malo. Arrived at this latter town, he did not seek the purchased hospitality of an hotel, but informed himself where dwelt "M. Citron, Friandeur," and hastened to pay his respects to our worthy friend Champignon.

It is impossible for a less able painter than a Hogarth or a Cruikshank to delineate the curious face which the quiet gastronomer put on when Belle-Rose entered his shop. He recollected his visiter's uncommon appetite, and cast a sad look at the dainties so invitingly spread out against the windows each side of the door. But his naturally generous disposition triumphed over that momentary feeling of selfishness, and he welcomed Belle-Rose with a cordiality even astonishing to the impudent and shameless adventurer himself. The fatted calf was immediately killed—the cloth was spread in the neat back parlour—the *cotelettes a la quadrille* were produced to tempt the appetite of the newly-arrived guest—and poor Champignon was amply rewarded in his own idea by the extravagant praises bestowed upon his cookery.

"Here is to your health, my dear Citron," said Belle-Rose, "since such be your name; although, to confess the truth, I admire your original one much more."

"A change was absolutely necessary, M. Belle-Rose," returned the gastronomer, as he filled his own and his companion's glass with marasquino.

"And pray, does your establishment prosper?"

"To my heart's content. There is not another shop like it in St. Malo, I flatter myself," answered Champignon.

"Ah! I am glad to hear such excellent news," cried Belle-Rose. "You know, my dear Cham—"



Citron, I always entertained a particular friendship for you; and had it not been for my advice, your fingers could never have touched the little bequest you received at the hands of De Rosann."

"Allow me to return my most sincere thanks," said Champignon. "And, while I think of our absent acquaintance, let me ask after your friend De Rosann."

"Yes—he was my friend—my intimate friend, as you say. I left him in London—enjoying himself—this marasquino is excellent—flirting with the girls—another glass, if you please—and carrying on a fine game—you may fill it up to the brim."

"I am rejoiced at these good tidings," exclaimed the gastronomer, having recourse a third time to the stone bottle in which the racy *liqueur* was contained.

"It was not with the five hundred francs alone that you set up this shop," said Belle-Rose after a pause, during which he savoured the marasquino as if it were the nectar of the gods.

"Do you not recollect that I had a cousin in St. Malo, to whom I once rendered important pecuniary assistance? I sought his aid and advice, and I found him not only grateful for my bounty towards him, but also willing to serve me. He lent me three thousand francs—procured me unlimited credit—and assisted me to the utmost of his power."

"You always have a little money in your till, then," said Belle-Rose.

"Thank God! my business is increasing daily," replied Champignon; "and I have no reason to complain."

"If I only had a thousand francs," cried Belle-Rose, "I should secure a rapid fortune."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the gastronomer: "how so?"

"By making rat-traps," returned Belle-Rose, affecting a serious air.

"Rat-traps!" ejaculated Champignon, who was



very much inclined to laugh. "There are already plenty of rat-traps in France."

"O yes!—common things—that hold each only one rat," said Belle-Rose without relaxing from his well-assumed gravity. "I have obtained a patent in England for my invention of a rat-trap, which is not larger than the stone-bottle you hold in your hand, and which can catch five-and-twenty rats at a time."

"Wonderful!" shouted Champignon. "Let us drink to the success of the rat-traps," he added, once more filling the glasses.

"And if I had a thousand francs to complete the necessary sum to take out a patent in France, I should make my fortune. I have already corresponded with the Ministers of Commerce and Public Instruction on the subject; and they have assured me of their patronage."

"So small a sum is the utmost you require!" cried Champignon.

"Every *centime*," answered the wily Belle-Rose; "and the person who would advance the money shall share in the profits."

"Nothing can be fairer," said Champignon, musing: then in a few minutes he added, "I think I could accommodate you—M. Belle-Rose—I am not a rich man—but I have certainly a few francs to spare—yes—I can lend you the money—and with pleasure, too."

"My dearest Citron—let me embrace you!" exclaimed Belle-Rose. "You have restored hope to my soul: the nation is swarming with rats, and I am sure of having a rapid sale for my traps. Give me the money; and this very minute will I commence my labours."

The credulous Champignon opened his desk and counted a thousand francs upon the table. Belle-Rose immediately conveyed the glittering coin to his pockets; and having embraced the generous friend he was so grossly deceiving, the adventurer departed, rejoiced at the success of his visit, while the gastrono-



mer was delighted at the prospect held out of reaping a considerable benefit from the lucrative speculation. "Belle-Rose is a clever fellow," said he to himself, when he was once more alone: "and before he has done with them, there will not be a rat nor a mouse all over the country."

As Belle-Rose issued from Champignon's shop, he encountered Mr. Clayton, and immediately recognised him to be the gentleman who accompanied the two ladies at Louis Dorval's house, and who had supplied De Rosann with a considerable sum of money. It was a maxim of Belle-Rose never to lose anything for want of civility, nor for want of asking. He therefore saluted Mr. Clayton, and made a remark relative to the weather, or some common-place matter.

"I think I have had the pleasure of seeing you before," said Mr. Clayton, acknowledging the adventurer's polite bow; "but my memory fails me as I grow older," he added with a smile.

Belle-Rose mentioned his name, and explained where they had met; and Mr. Clayton accidentally noticed that De Rosann was in London.

"I came from England myself three days ago," said Belle-Rose; "and am not at all sorry to be back again in my native land. The English are a—" he was going to say "a miserable, morose, reserved people—" but recollecting Mr. Clayton was himself a son of Albion, he corrected his unlucky allusion in time, and added "a hospitable, kind, and generous race; but I am fond of the laughter, mirth, and gaiety we meet in France."

"Did you see M. De Rosann in London? or perhaps you accompanied him thither?" said Mr. Clayton.

"We parted at St. Malo six or seven weeks ago," returned Belle-Rose, "totally unaware of each other's intentions; and we accidentally encountered in the English metropolis. De Rosann went by Southamp-



ton, and I by Calais, thence direct to London ; consequently I arrived before him only a few hours."

"I expect him at St. Malo in a day or two," observed Mr. Clayton. "He would doubtless have been here already, had not the tempestuous weather most probably detained him at Southampton, by which town he intended to return, according to the contents of the last letter I received from him."

"He has left a sad heart behind him," said Belle-Rose, affecting a melancholy tone. "Poor Selina Robson ! she doted upon our friend with as sincere an affection as woman can demonstrate towards man."

"What ! did M. De Rosann make a conquest amongst my fair countrywomen ?" exclaimed Mr. Clayton.

"Their love was reciprocal," returned Belle-Rose. "De Rosann himself has assured me of their mutual attachment. He wore a lock of her hair next to his heart—he passed his days in her society, and his nights in dreaming of her : wherever Miss Selina Robson was, you might be sure Alfred was not far off. At every ball they danced together six or seven *quadrilles* consecutively ; they walked out alone in the parks ; they wrote long letters to each other, although they met every morning, and separated only in the evening—"

"This is most singular !" cried Mr. Clayton, becoming considerably interested in the lying narrative which Belle-Rose, who was totally ignorant of De Rosann's attachment for Eloise, invented as he told it, according to his usual system of exaggeration, without any decided aim, save that of pretending to have an intimate knowledge of the affairs of others, and to laugh at the credulity of his attentive listeners behind their backs.

"Oh ! yes—I assure you, that in the fashionable circles of the West-end nothing was heard nor spoken of save the handsome young Frenchman and the rich banker's daughter."

"Ah ! she was a rich banker's daughter, eh ?" said



Mr. Clayton with a bitter smile, as he cursed in his own mind the mercenary soul that was capable of forgetting so pure a being as his niece, for the temptations which a wealthy dower could offer.

“But their love was disappointed,” continued Belle-Rose. De Rosann proposed—”

“He proposed,” echoed Mr. Clayton.

“As I tell you,” said Belle-Rose: “he proposed, and was rejected. The old people knew he had not a farthing, and that their daughter’s money was the only object which attracted him—still the young lady was certainly very pretty—”

“She was very pretty, eh?” again interrupted the uncle.

“A beautiful creature,” returned Belle-Rose: “and between ourselves—I have not the pleasure of knowing your name—De Rosann is no bad judge. But, as I was saying, the old people would not consent—a dreadful scene ensued—Miss Selina fainting, and Alfred threatening to cut his throat. Even I, his best and most intimate friend, his confidant throughout the whole affair—even I was unable to pacify him.”

“Was he so much attached to her?”

“He loved her certainly very sincerely—but he loved her money more.”

“And wherefore is he coming back to France?”

“Because he has met with a repulse that he cannot easily forget,” answered Belle-Rose.

“Thank you for your information—for the news, M. Belle-Rose: I wish you a very good afternoon:” and without waiting to give the other an opportunity of returning his salutation, the wrathful uncle turned abruptly away.

Nothing could exceed Mr. Clayton’s indignation. He felt the blow the more deeply, inasmuch as he fancied he had been the innocent means of deluding his niece with false hopes, and of replying to letters filled with perjury, deceit, and falsehood. De Rosann, he thought, never could have loved Eloise save for interested motives; and he resigned her for the first



wealthy young lady he met. Now that his speculation with Miss Robson had failed, he was doubtless about to return to France to prosecute his suit in another quarter. But Mr. Clayton was determined he should not succeed ; and he only repented not having listened to the advice of his sister-in-law long ago. That Belle-Rose could have so grossly deceived him, he did not for one moment suspect ; and he returned home in a humour so singularly composed of disappointment, indignation, shame, and grief, that he knew not whether to begin with a curse or a sigh.

Eloise and her mother were in the drawing-room, when Mr. Clayton entered, and they both uttered an exclamation of alarm at the same moment ; for his altered countenance wore so extraordinary an expression, that they were fearful some accident had befallen him.

" 'Tis all over !" he cried, throwing his hat with violence on the table, and flinging himself into a chair. " All confidence in mankind is forever at an end. Were my own father alive and here to tell me he would do so-and-so, I would not believe him."

" Good God ! William," cried Mrs. Clayton, " has any thing happened ?"

" De Rosann—"

" De Rosann—oh ! what of him ?" cried Eloise, her heart sinking within her, for she anticipated some dreadful tidings relative to her lover.

" De Rosann is a villain !" cried Mr. Clayton in a voice of thunder.

" Speak, uncle—speak ! what has he done ? Oh hasten and relieve my anxiety—my suspense !"—and the poor girl burst into an agony of tears, while her bosom throbbed convulsively, and a cold chill came over her like the icy touch of death.

" De Rosann has abused my confidence—has deceived me—has deceived you, Eloise—has deceived the whole world," exclaimed the enraged uncle. " He has paid his addresses to a young lady in London—he has proposed—and he has been rejected. And now



that all his hopes in those quarters are at an end—now that his absence has been productive of no good—he declares his intention of returning to France—and will doubtless come to claim the hand of his expectant bride!”

“De Rosann faithless!” cried Eloise, suddenly raising her head, and withdrawing the handkerchief from her eyes: “O no—my dear uncle—do not believe it. You have been deceived by slanderous tongues—evil reports have done him this wrong—I am convinced, I will pledge my existence for his fidelity!”

“Generous girl! alas—that you should thus buoy yourself up with vain hopes!” exclaimed Mr. Clayton. “This moment only have I left an individual who knows him well, who has been his companion in London, who was his confidant throughout—”

“’Tis false—all false!” interrupted Eloise. “That individual cannot be trust-worthy, since he so readily betrays the secrets of his friend. But what is his name—his profession—his rank?”

“His name is Belle-Rose—and he was an associate with De Rosann at Brest!” returned Mr. Clayton.

“Do not credit his tale, then, uncle. He has some motives for thus defaming an absent friend. You owe a duty to yourself—to De Rosann—and to me,” continued Eloise with a vehemence she had never before used; “and that duty is to listen to Alfred’s defence—to accuse him, and to demand proofs of his innocence: and if he be unable to produce such proofs—if he be indeed the faithless, perjured, heartless swindler he is represented—then renounce, forget him—and I will eradicate his image from my breast, although, in so doing, I break my lacerated heart!”

“Eloise—dear Eloise, compose yourself,” cried Mrs. Clayton, terrified at the energy with which the unfortunate girl spoke, and dreadfully disappointed at the fatal discovery she now made of the permanence of her daughter’s affection for De Rosann.

“Proofs are vain; accusation and defence are alike



useless," said Mr. Clayton, obstinately determined not to question the veracity of Belle-Rose, because he deemed the evidence against De Rosann too damning to admit of an easy refutation, and because he felt himself so little in his own estimation at having been thus duped by a boy. "Eloise, you must now nerve yourself to bear the hour of trial: your day-dreams of bliss are past; the anticipated smiles of the future are turned to frowns; and it is my duty," he continued in an elevated tone of voice, "to protect my relatives from insult—to remove them from a place where they may be exposed to the impertinent apologies of a villain who will doubtless seek, by specious tales, to delude you, Eloise, still farther: it is my duty to protect you, I say, and I will do it. Tomorrow morning, at eight o'clock, we leave St. Malo, on our return to Paris."

"You are right, William," said Mrs. Clayton.

"No, dear uncle—stay, O, stay!" cried Eloise, almost broken-hearted: "believe me, De Rosann is innocent. Why will you condemn him unheard? Why listen to the falsities uttered by one who is a stranger to you?"

"Eloise," returned Mr. Clayton calmly: "De Rosann's mysterious conduct in proceeding to England instead of to Paris, as I advised him; his long absence in London; his continued evasions to excuse his sojourn there before he enclosed a letter purported to be written by an individual possessing the ability to obtain a full pardon for him, and the plain, uncontradictory tale of that Belle-Rose, whose confidence in me was certainly indiscreet, without destroying the validity of the evidence; all these circumstances combined, form a fearful accusation against him whom I treated as a friend—whom I loved as a son—O De Rosann—De Rosann!"

And Mr. Clayton wiped away tears from his eyes.

Mr. Clayton was a man of violent prejudices. His present hatred for De Rosann was as great as his former attachment. Indignation had so blinded him,



that he would not listen to reason. It was, therefore, in vain that Eloise fell upon her knees to endeavour to dissuade him from his purposed departure. Unfortunately her mother perfectly acquiesced in the design of her brother-in-law, and only supported his opinions with increasing warmth. The wretched girl retired to her chamber and wept bitterly. Not for one instant did she entertain the slightest suspicion of her lover's treachery. She judged his mind and character by her own; she reflected that when he supposed himself to be wealthy and prosperous in his affairs, he demonstrated towards her every proof of a sincere affection which could not have been interested; and she resolved to combat the accusations of her mother and uncle with all the force of argument the emergency of the case might bring to her aid.

In the midst of her sorrowful ruminations, an idea suddenly struck her that animated her countenance with a smile; and she sat down to her desk and wrote a short note, which she carefully sealed and placed in her bosom. When this was done, she felt more tranquil, and suffered new hopes to enliven her spirits; for she remembered that De Rosann could write his justification—that her uncle dared not compromise his character as a just man by refusing to read it—and that they might still be happy.

On the following morning, as Eloise ascended the steps of the carriage that was to bear her back to Paris, she slipped the note into the hands of the porter of the house, and laid her finger upon her rosy lip. The motion was understood and acknowledged by an equally significant nod, to the inexpressible delight of our fair heroine.



## CHAPTER XV.

## LEBLOND.

DE ROSANN knocked at the door of the house which Mr. Clayton, his sister-in-law, and niece, had left two days before. The porter answered his summons, and informed him of the family's sudden departure. Our hero remained for some moments rivetted to the spot in stupid astonishment, unable to utter a word; and he was only recalled to himself by the sight of a note which the porter placed in his hands. He tore it open as if life and death were dependant on the contents, and with a beating heart read the following words:—

“Dearest Alfred,

“The tongue of calumny has prejudiced my uncle against you, and made my mother still more resolute than ever to terminate any engagement existing between us. I *alone* am convinced of your constant fidelity, for I judge you by myself. A man, named Belle-Rose, has poured the syllables of poison into the ears of Mr. Clayton. He accuses you of paying your addresses to a banker's daughter in London, and declares that you have met with a repulse. Pardon me, dear Alfred, if I repeat the scandalous tale which I firmly believe to be false. You must write to Mr. Clayton, and refute such vile aspersions on your character: for he is so indignant at your supposed misconduct, that he would not listen to you were you to demand an interview, to avoid which he has resolved to leave St. Malo and return to Paris. Address your letter to our old apartments, which we are to occupy



again, in the Rue des Pyramides; and do not be alarmed at the suddenness of our departure. The obstacle will be easily surmounted—Mr. Clayton cannot refuse to read your defence—and he is not unjust, nor deaf to the voice of reason, when his passions have had time to cool, and his wrath is moderated.

“Believe me, my dear Alfred,

“Ever your most affectionate

“ELOISE CLAYTON.”

“Noble girl—generous disposition!” exclaimed Alfred, carefully folding up the letter and placing it next to his heart. He then remunerated the porter, who smiled significantly, as if he were aware that the tender note related to a love-affair: but our hero did not stay to notice the man’s animated countenance, nor the polite bows he made in return for the fifteen francs he had so easily earned.

Disappointed, but far from despairing, De Rosann returned to the inn; and notwithstanding the fatigues of travelling which he had already endured, he ordered a post-chaise to be got ready immediately. The services of four horses were this time put in requisition; and Alfred found himself on his road to Paris, while the landlord declared “That positively of all the obstinately headstrong young men he had ever accidentally seen, none could be feasibly compared to the indubitably mad-brained youth who had instantaneously quitted his hotel, without even prudently giving himself absolutely the time to enjoy comfortably an elegantly arranged repast.”

As the weather was hot, and the roads were not exceedingly dusty, De Rosann had ordered the carriage to be opened, by lowering the top: he could thus command a view of the surrounding country as he journeyed onwards to the French capital. About a league from St. Malo he espied a man mounted upon a donkey, and endeavouring to force the poor animal into a gallop—a pace which apparently in no way suited the sober ideas of the obstinate beast, for he suddenly lifted



up his heels and threw the luckless rider over his head. Our hero instantly recognised Champignon, and cried out to the postilions to stop for a moment. The gastronome slowly raised himself from the ground, and cast a timid glance at the person seated in the carriage; but the instant he noticed De Rosann, he rushed forward, and gave him such a hearty shake of the hand, that Alfred was obliged to beseech him to relax his iron grasp.

"Can I really believe my own eyes?—is it indeed you, M. De Rosann? or are you dead, and does your ghost wander about these parts, like a spectre in a church-yard?" cried Champignon, overjoyed at thus encountering his late benefactor.

"'Tis really I myself," answered Alfred, with a smile. "But wherefore do you ride on an animal whose stubbornness you cannot overcome?"

"The fact is," said Champignon, "that I am an excellent horseman, but I cannot maintain my seat on a jack-ass."

"I am afraid you will never be a Franconi,\* Champignon."

"Call me Citron, if you please," whispered the gastronome.

"Ah! I recollect your prospectus," said our hero. "Mr. Clayton forwarded the parcel to me in London, and I did not fail to make known your schemes to my friends."

"I thank you all the same; but I have renounced the idea of establishing my joint-stock company," observed Champignon, mournfully.

"And wherefore, might I inquire?"

"Because the individuals at a certain place in a certain town could not pay their subscriptions; and my cousin dissuaded me from the enterprise."

"He did perfectly right. But tell me—have you not seen Belle-Rose at St. Malo?" demanded Alfred.

The gastronome instantly related all that passed

\* The French *Ducrow*.



between himself and the individual in question, whom he had not seen since the day the thousand francs were counted down upon the table. De Rosann thanked Champignon for the information, assured him that Belle-Rose was nothing more than a common cheat, and bade him adieu with many kind wishes in favour of his speedy success in business. The postilions whipped their horses, Champignon mounted his donkey, and the two equipages separated to pursue their respective directions.

De Rosann was at a loss to conceive whether Belle-Rose had purposely or inadvertently calumniated him in the presence of Mr. Clayton. He did not think his ancient companion was of a malignant disposition: but he knew full well that Belle-Rose seldom opened his lips without uttering an untruth, or exaggerating a trifle till it became an affair of importance. Our hero was moreover aware that Belle-Rose did not know of the engagement subsisting between him and Eloise—unless, indeed, Mr. Clayton had informed him of it during this last visit of the *chevalier d'industrie* to St. Malo. He however persuaded himself that the evil was not irreparable; he buoyed himself up with the hopes held out by Eloise in her letter; and he again satisfactorily contemplated the numerous advocates in his favour which he had lately accumulated.

Our readers may readily suppose that on De Rosann's arrival at Meurice's hotel in Paris, the first step he took towards a reconciliation with Mr. Clayton, was to obey the injunctions of Eloise, and write a long letter to the incensed uncle, explaining the circumstances which were connected with Selina, and of which we have given full and ample accounts in preceding chapters. He detailed undisguisedly the confessions of that unfortunate girl—minutely narrated every step he took in the disagreeable and embarrassing position her love placed him in—and concluded his defence by requesting Mr. Clayton to seek a corroboration from Selina herself, and to inquire of



Mr. Robson if he had ever been applied to for his consent to the marriage of De Rosann and his daughter. Alfred annexed to his letter the address of the worthy banker, and implored Mr. Clayton to lose no time in writing to obtain a satisfactory reply that might lead to a rectification of the misunderstanding, and do a calumniated individual a justice but too well merited. He did not, however, explain any other of his adventures, being still resolved to reserve for himself the pleasure of producing an agreeable surprise when his character in Mr. Clayton's estimation should be re-established—an event to which he looked forward with the utmost impatience. Having concluded his lengthy epistle, he carried it himself to the Rue des Pyramides, and was rejoiced to find that the family had returned to the lodgings it formerly occupied ere change of air and scenery was recommended to Eloise, and caused the removal to St. Malo.

Having thus obeyed the dictates of his own judgment as well as the advice of Eloise, our hero hastened to discharge another important duty ; and he lost no time in proceeding to the Rue de la Channoinesse with the bills and other effects he had been authorised to receive for the mysterious Leblond.

Our hero alighted from a cabriolet, which he had hired, opposite a gloomy house in the Rue de la Channoinesse, and inquired for the individual whom he sought. According to the directions of the porter, he mounted a narrow stair-case, and knocked at a door on the second story. An old woman admitted him to a dirty apartment, inquired his business, and without saying another word left him alone a good half-hour to his reflections. When his patience was more than exhausted, she again made her appearance, and desired him to follow her. He obeyed the command, somewhat sulkily given, and was introduced to a species of office, or study, where sate a middle-aged man busily employed in writing at a desk. The old woman motioned our hero to be seated. and retired



on tip-toe, as if she were afraid of disturbing her master.

It will be recollected that when Leblond spoke to De Rosann and Belle-Rose through the *guichet* of the *cachot* at Verneuil, the night was dark and all objects were indistinguishable. Alfred did not therefore know whether he were now in the presence of Leblond or a stranger. But he was not long kept in suspense. The person at the desk soon laid aside his pen, and turned towards our hero, who sate impatiently on his chair, waiting the moment when he was to give an account of the commission with which he had been charged.

“M. Alfred De Rosann, I believe,” said the man of business.

“The same,” returned our hero; “and you are M. Leblond, I presume.”

“You are right. Have you received my last letter, in which I requested you to become the bearer of certain effects—”

“I have executed your orders to the best of my endeavour,” returned De Rosann, interrupting the other, and laying a quantity of papers upon the desk.

“You have been zealous and diligent in the cause,” said Leblond, with a gracious smile, as he cast a hasty glance over the bills which Alfred had brought from London; “and be assured that an ample reward will not be lacking to recompense you for your services.”

“I have already experienced many kindnesses at your hands,” cried De Rosann; “and I return you my most sincere thanks for the royal pardon you condescended to procure me.”

“Speak not of such a trifle: your gratitude will shortly be put to a more severe test than perhaps you imagine. The time is nearly at hand when you must prove that benefits are not thrown away upon you, and that you can be trusted in affairs much more important than the one already confided to you.”

“Show me my duties—point out a means by which I can demonstrate my gratitude, and I shall not be



found backward in serving those to whom I am under a thousand obligations. But wherefore this reserve?" exclaimed De Rosann: "wherefore—"

"Seek not as yet to be acquainted with mysteries I dare not develop. Recollect that I am only an agent—that I do not even myself know the entire *arcana* which you are desirous should be exposed to your view, and that I am subservient to higher authorities, whose mandates I cannot disobey. Even in my own dwelling—in this room where we are now talking—would my life be taken from me, if I betrayed the little entrusted to me. The very walls of Paris have ears—spies are in every quarter; you think you converse with a common acquaintance in a *café*, or a news-room, and your words are repeated again; thence are your actions judged. As I informed you in my letter, the moment when you are to act for those who have befriended you, will proclaim its own arrival—will denote by terrible signs its own presence. Wait patiently, therefore—that moment may be in an hour—to-morrow—or a year hence."

"It would be indelicate for me to question you farther," said De Rosann, considerably disappointed at the probable result of his visit, which instead of explaining only increased the mystery he was so anxious to penetrate. "You have no farther commands for me at present."

"None," returned Leblond. "But before you depart, allow me to ask you a few questions, and do not deem them impertinent."

"Speak! I shall answer your interrogations with pleasure."

"You have no idea of entering into business a second time?"

"Not the slightest. I am totally unfitted for commercial transactions; they neither suit my taste nor my ability."

"Nor do you intend to embrace any profession?"

"Decidedly not. I am perhaps on the eve of mar-



riage—at least I hope so—and shall therefore become a peaceable citizen.”

“Have you any private resources of your own?” inquired Leblond.

“I lately inherited a considerable sum of money,” replied our hero.

“You intend to reside in Paris for the present?”

“Yes; particularly as it is uncertain when my services may be required,” answered Alfred, alluding to his present companion’s own words.

“Good!” cried Leblond, rising from his seat. “I am obliged to you for the frankness with which you have replied to my queries, and again repeat that you will not go unrewarded, if you continue to evince the same zealous disposition in the cause of patrons whose power, whose authority, and whose means are extensive, although as yet invisible.”

“Might I be allowed to ask if Belle-Rose be still engaged in the same service?” said De Rosann, after a momentary pause.

“He is,” returned Leblond, casting his eye over one of the pages of a ponderous book, on which was written an immense number of names, with the professions, abodes, and resources of the individuals thus inscribed on the leaves of the vast folio. “And, if I mistake not,” added Leblond, once more referring to the book, “he is at this moment in Paris. But perhaps you have seen him?”

“No; I asked for information,” remarked De Rosann, “and to have an opportunity of advising you to beware of him; for there is no meanness, baseness, nor treachery, of which he is not capable.”

“But he cannot cheat us,” answered Leblond, with a peculiar emphasis: “he dare not even if he wished and had the power to deceive your masters and mine.”

De Rosann had nothing to reply to this assurance; he accordingly took his leave of Leblond, and returned to Meurice’s hotel, where he shut himself up in his room to ponder on the conversation that had



taken place during the interview with the mysterious agent of mysterious superiors.

But it was in vain that he endeavoured to fix his sole thoughts upon that topic: the image of the beautiful Eloise perpetually intervened, and changed the current of his ideas. He could never sufficiently admire the generous disposition of the heroic girl, that refused to listen to the calumniating tongues which were anxious to asperse the character of her lover, and separate them for ever. He called to mind all her former tenderness and unquestionable attachment when, in an hour of peril and distress, he was the inmate of a gloomy dungeon. Now that fortune smiled upon him, and prosperity, with a bland countenance, seemed to beckon him forward to eventual success, he was determined to evince his gratitude and unchangeable affection to his beloved Eloise, and devote every instant of his time to promote her felicity, so soon as he could obtain a legal right to declare himself her protector and friend. And he felt that he should be proud in presenting such a faultless bride to the numerous acquaintances who would soon flock round him, when the tongue of fame had proclaimed his return to Paris, his innocence, his pardon, and his independence.



## CHAPTER XVI.

## THE CITIZENS OF PARIS.

DE ROSANN passed a restless night. His mind was too much agitated by a variety of conflicting ideas to allow sleep to visit his eyes. He tossed backwards and forwards on his slumberless pillow, at one moment pondering on the mysterious conduct of Leblond, at another on the noble behaviour of Eloise. He would then blame himself for not having made her uncle acquainted with everything that had happened to him since they last met—the particulars relative to the documents of the deceased Marquis de Denneville, the dying request of La Motte, and the pardon that had been procured for him through the influence of his secret patrons. In five minutes a complete reaction took place in our hero's opinions. He applauded himself for having withheld those important communications, and felt certain that his defence, and an application to Mr. Robson by letter, would terminate the whole affair in his favour. He moreover recollected that some consideration was due to his own pride, and that he was not to be idly accused by every scandalous tongue, nor to be condemned without explanation by a prejudiced judge. On these reflections would intrude the idea that he ought to make any sacrifice to forward his suit with Eloise, and to give pleasure to one who promised to be a powerful advocate in his cause.

So early as seven o'clock, did De Rosann leave his feverish couch; and having partaken of a hasty meal, he sought the fresh air to dissipate a partial headache,



which want of sleep had most probably caused. Meurice's hotel was then in the Rue St. Honoré. Our hero directed his steps towards the fashionable quarter of Paris; and having traversed the Place Vendôme, he gained the Boulevards by the Rue de la Paix. The morning was fine—the rays of a jovial sun gilded the thousand towers of the sovereign city of Europe; and all nature seemed blythe and gay. The shops were already opened; but it appeared to our hero, as he advanced along the shady walk which surrounds so considerable a portion of the gay city, that an unusual number of people for such an hour was abroad. At length he noticed many with anxious faces—others bustling backwards and forwards from one house to another—some assuming important airs of mystery—groups here and there gathered together in earnest conversation—a few carrying newspapers in their hands, and stopping their acquaintances to point out a particular paragraph—all this struck De Rosann as singular and alarming.

When he arrived at the Porte St. Martin, he turned to retrace his steps—and the mystery, the bustle, and the agitation were still the same. Some had smiles upon their countenances—others showed evident signs of terror; one spoke to his neighbour in a tone of energy and vehemence; a second listened with mouth half open and staring eyes; a third rubbed his hands together, as if he were satisfied at a particular occurrence; a fourth endeavoured to repress the swaggering air of the individual with whom he was conversing; a fifth cast anxious looks around; in fine, it was but too evident that the public spirit was labouring under a strong excitement, the cause of which was an enigma our hero could not solve. A secret presentiment of foreboding evil took possession of his mind. He felt an agitation suddenly seize upon him, and he endeavoured in vain to account for it. He experienced little dread as to the eventual success of his suit with Eloise; his property was safe; his person appeared in no danger; and yet he was



uneasy. He seemed to draw his breath with difficulty as he walked along; he saw not things as they usually were; a change was perceptibly taking place, but a change of what he could not determine. Paris wore an air of confusion, dismay, and alarm; the atmosphere, that hung over her head, appeared pregnant with a storm about to burst; the looks of her citizens, as they walked or stood in the streets, were foreboding and prophetic. Still our hero was at a loss to imagine how those looks were foreboding, and the nature of the events they had the air of prophesying. He essayed to persuade himself that all was calm and tranquil as usual, and that a disordered imagination tortured things into unnatural shapes. But he could not satisfy his mind that it was an illusion—he was no Pyrrhonian—he confounded not ideas and matter—he saw strange sights, and he believed in their existence.

He walked with a rapid, though uneven step, and at length arrived opposite to Tortoni's. At nine o'clock in the morning there are generally very few loungers outside. The politicians discuss their newspaper with their breakfast in the gilded *salons*; the speculator, the banker, the discounteur, and the correspondents of the *Times*, *Advertiser*, *Herald*, *Post*, and *Chronicle*, do not throng opposite the door, and form into separate groups, till later. But De Rosann saw that they had already arrived—that the speculator had left his accounts, the banker his warm bed, the discounteur his cabriolet, in which he visited the merchants or tradesmen with whom he did business, and the correspondent of the English journals had deserted his desk. They were gathered into separate knots; each knot appeared to have a spokesman to explain something of vital importance to the rest; and the others listened with attention. They conversed in low whispers, as if afraid that the very walls should hear their opinions; they cast frequent glances of uneasy anxiety around, fearful of being overheard by one who would betray them. And yet the topic of



their conversation was generally known. De Rosann marked the air of agitation, the gaze of astonishment, the attitude of resignation, the smile of incredulity, the laugh of assurance, the glow of pride, the shudder of cowardice, the silence of conviction, the noise of doubt, and the tranquillity of hope. Every passion, every feeling was there excited: the signs were ominous and alarming.

De Rosann became more and more curious to ascertain the cause of this extraordinary excitement. He ascended the steps that lead to the front parlour of Tortoni's *café*, and seated himself at a table. The waiter desired to know what he would take. Our hero hesitated—his mind was in a state of confusion—he had already breakfasted—and he ordered breakfast a second time in the agitation of the moment. The only person who appeared indifferent to what was going on, was the female seated at the bar. De Rosann approached her, made a polite bow, and requested to be informed of the causes of the mysterious behaviour he noticed in every one save herself. The female did not answer a word, but took a newspaper from a shelf, and placed it in Alfred's hands. He thanked her, returned to his seat, and cast his eyes over the journal, doubtful whether his question had been understood. It was the *Moniteur* of the day before—the twenty-sixth of July, 1830; and the first words that attracted De Rosann's attention, after a cursory glance, were those ever memorable ones—“*The freedom of the periodical press is suspended!*”\*

There was at once an explanation of all he had seen, and all he had deemed unaccountable. From his palace of St. Cloud the rash monarch issued those terrible mandates that were to pave the way for the overthrow of his dynasty, place another upon the throne, and cast his ministers into a prison. The royal tyrant, in his insolent pride, deemed that the sons of France

\* *La Liberté de la presse periodique est suspendue !*



were to be trampled under foot, and to bow the knee to his majesty in blind idolatry. De Rosann scarcely believed his sight—he gazed a second time at the journal he held in his hand, and still the official column commenced with the same words—the Gazette declared the privilege of recording public opinions to be suddenly withdrawn. Hence those diversified feelings expressed upon different countenances; hence those anxious glances, those furtive looks, those timid whisperings. But the popular fury soon broke forth: astonishment yielded to indignation, indignation to cries of “Liberty,” and the crown trembled upon the head of the imprudent Charles. Like the fluid communicated by the chains of a galvanic battery, flew the spirit of rebellion; an oppressed people arose to combat for its rights and for its privileges; the tri-coloured flag was hoisted from many a window; the tri-coloured cockade was attached to many a cap; De Rosann now guessed the meaning of the watch-word he had whispered in the ear of Plombier; all mystery was dispelled; he was one of the chosen partizans of the original agitators; and, according to his promise to Leblond, he seized a musket and a sword, and enrolled himself amongst the ranks of those who fought for their rights against the evil devices of tyranny and oppression!

For three days the combat raged with sanguinary violence. The trees of the Boulevards were cut down to form barricades against the approach of the cavalry regiments which still supported the Bourbon cause; and when the citizens lacked arms and ammunition, they tore up the pavement to hurl at their opponents. From every window was pointed a deadly weapon of some kind: old men, young maidens, infants, and feeble women lent their aid to repel the royalists. Many a widow avenged her slaughtered husband’s massacre—many a veteran, with hoary locks and wrinkled brow, laid aside the staff that for years had supported his tottering limbs, and brandished the glittering sword. The tri-coloured



banner waved in all directions—cries of “Freedom!” echoed on every side; and the rash monarch repented his audacity when too late.

De Rosann became the leader of a gallant band of young heroes, chiefly students and gentlemen of fortune, who were rejoiced at this opportunity of displaying their patriotism, and of combatting in the cause of their country’s liberties. They formed a squadron of daring warriors, and rushed upon the mounted foemen with the courage of lions joining in deadly strife. Where the extremities of the Rue de la Paix and the Rue Neuve Saint Augustin join the Boulevards, did they combat long and manfully against the detachment of cavalry that opposed them. Barri- cades were formed to repulse the royalists, and De Rosann’s band every moment gained ground as their foemen retreated. The skirmishing fight lasted till the little squad of heroes drove the lancers as far as the gates of the noble dwelling occupied by Prince Polignac himself, the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Thither did the defeated cavalry retreat; and De Rosann and his band dared follow them no longer; for their eyes caught sight of the massive ordnance which was drawn up in terrible array opposite the house of the prime minister, and on the side of the Madeleine that faces the extremity of the Boulevard. Between those two points, there was not a soul, save the artillery-men standing with lighted matches close to their cannon. De Rosann saw that it was madness to advance any farther; he accordingly ordered a retreat; and placing himself at the head of his companions, he led them to encounter fresh adversaries.

The civil strife was terrible in the extreme. Fathers fought with their sons in the respective ranks of the confused battle—uncles combatted hand to hand against their nephews—cousins, expecting to find each other serving under the same banners, encountered on opposite sides, and did not tarry to expostulate, but directed their deadly weapons each to the heart of his relative. Thus parricides and



fratricides were not wanting to crown the cup of general misery—bloodshed, murder, and strife afforded a rich banquet to the vultures of slaughter. The streets were encumbered with dead bodies—horses and men fell together wounded on the ground—the stones, which the citizens tore from the streets, rained like torrents of hail upon the ranks of the royalists—servant fought against master—the dependant opposed his benefactor—the student lifted the gleaming sword over the head of his tutor—the pupil heeded not the lamentable cries of his master—school-boy, collegian, apprentice, mixed in the commotion, and either excited the tumult by their shouts, or aided their brethren in the fight.

When the officers and dependants of Charles the Tenth were expelled by the incensed populace from all the public buildings, the revolutionary mob took possession of the Tuileries, the Hotel of the Ministry of Finance, the Bank of France, and other government institutions : and it is a well-substantiated fact that the most indigent and poverty-stricken of the sentries placed in different directions, not only refrained from touching a jewel of the smallest value, but also threatened to put to death any one who attempted to take advantage of the tumult, and appropriate the wealth he might find in the palace of the Tuileries to his own use. On the first day of the revolution, an immense sum of money arrived in Paris from M. Rothschild's house in London. It was packed up in a cart, and was accompanied by a trustworthy individual of the name of Atkins from Calais. Mr. Atkins entered Paris without the slightest suspicion of the sudden tumult that had arisen in the city ; and it was not till he found it impossible to recede, that the real state of affairs was communicated to him. He nevertheless proceeded strait to the Bank of France ; and although he was surrounded by the lowest of the low—although he passed through a miserable set of beings, half naked—half starved as they were, not a hand was stretched out against the



tempting treasure,—not a glance betokened an evil design—not a gesture threatened its security.\* Poverty was forgotten—hunger was disregarded during those eventful days. The French fought for liberty and not for gain,—they did not make the principles of a glorious insurrection an excuse for pillage and licentiousness. Paris was crowded with dead bodies—but they all fell in the cause of valour, whichever banner they had fought under. No robbery, no rape, no misdemeanor of any kind sullied that revolution, nor did it prepare a throne for a Robespierre and a Napoleon.

It was a glorious sight to see heroes fighting in a righteous cause. Paris had awakened from a profound stupor—the people were wearied of languishing beneath a tyrant's rod—the watchword had been passed round—and thousands came forward to hoist the tricoloured flag. There was but little indecision after the appearance of that royal mandate, which threatened to reduce a mighty nation to the lowest abyss of slavery. The flame of the revolution broke out in two or three places at the same time; and De Rosann was one of those who comprehended the reason of so sudden and simultaneous an insurrection. Seventy-two short hours would not have sufficed to cast off chains artfully woven, and craftily thrown round a million of men, had not preparations and resolutions how to act been primarily thought of and planned. Hundreds of strangers were in the ranks of the insurgents; inhabitants of distant towns were on the spot to aid the popular cause; and the visage of many a notorious character was recognised by the police in the heat of the battle. The refuse of society—the lowest of the low—the escaped criminal, the undetected malefactor, the lurking thief, the daring adventurer, and the insolent beggar, all forgot their separate avocations, and joined in the general shout of “Liberty! Liberty!”

\* Fact: *me ipso teste*.—G. W. M. R.



Foremost in the ranks of the revolutionists, De Rosann recognised Leblond. That mysterious agent of the vast intrigues which had accomplished the events now brought about, gave a significant nod to our hero—and when a sudden movement brought them near each other, he cried, in a triumphant tone, “Did I not prophesy truly, M. De Rosann? Has not the glorious moment proclaimed its own presence?” And without waiting for a reply, he again brandished the gory weapon of death which he held in his hand, and rushed upon the royal cohorts with demoniac courage.

It must not be imagined that our hero forgot his beloved Eloise in the din, the excitement, and the danger of battle. Often did he tremble for her safety; and when on the morning of the third day he understood that the strife was bloody and well maintained in the Rue des Pyramides, and in all the immediate neighbourhood of the Tuileries, he felt his heart sink within him; for thousands had already paid dearly for a rash curiosity, and had been killed at their very windows by the musquetry of the soldiers or the random shots of the citizens. Towards the quarter where Eloise dwelt with her mother and uncle, did De Rosann hasten, followed by the little band that placed itself under his guidance. He cast an anxious glance towards the windows of the apartments which he well remembered, and to his inexpressible delight he saw that the white Venetian blinds were fast closed. His mind felt relieved of a considerable weight; and he turned his attention to the surrounding warfare.

The civil conflict raged in that quarter with terrible violence. The street was entirely divested of pavement—the marks of the musket-balls may be seen at the present moment upon the pillars of the colonnades and the walls of the houses. At the corner of the Rue St. Honoré, a handful of revolutionists combatted valiantly against an overpowering military force. De Rosann hurried to the assistance of the gallant squadron; and, to his surprise, discovered that



it was headed by Belle-Rose, who fought like a lion, desperately and bravely. His left arm hung useless by his side—his left cheek displayed a ghastly wound—and his clothes were covered with dripping gore. Still did his right hand wield the glittering sword, and deal slaughter around. Our hero himself was astonished at the extraordinary magnanimity of one whom he fancied too much devoted to existence to risk it in a cause that would not eventually much benefit an adventurer accustomed to live upon his wits. But Belle-Rose was a Frenchman in the true spirit of the word—and when once excited, he forgot everything save glory and renown.

De Rosann's aid arrived too late. Combatting against fearful odds, and pierced by a multitude of weapons—covered with honourable wounds, Belle-Rose became gradually weak and faint—his sight was suddenly dimmed—his brain was confused—he struck feeble and harmless blows at random—and at length fell in a state of insensibility into the arms of his former companion. A feeling of commiseration took possession of our hero's breast. He knew not whither to bear the dying man—he could not leave him to expire in the street, and perhaps to be trampled upon ere the vital spark should have left his body. Irresolute how to act, he drew the almost inanimate Belle-Rose away from the heat of the battle, and deposited him beneath the colonnade which runs on each side of the Rue des Pyramides. There he halted and turned round as if to seek a place of security whither he could carry his burthen. The wicket of a large gate or *porte-cochere* was open; and he had accidentally stopped before it. He gazed wistfully into the yard behind—and immediately recognised the house where the Claytons resided. He did not hesitate another moment, but dragged the still senseless form he protected to the porter's lodge, and hastily recommended the dying man to the care of an old woman whom he found there. She was busily engaged in rehearsing her prayers, when Alfred thus unceremoniously interrupted her devotions. The pious portress—for she



it was herself—instantly rose from her knees, and obeyed De Rosann's commands: she recollected his handsome countenance, and was moreover humane in her disposition. Alfred inquired if Miss Clayton were in good health; and having received satisfactory replies to that and other questions which he put to the old woman relative to his adored Eloise, he recommended Belle-Rose to the especial care of the kind portress; and once more returned to take the lead of his gallant followers.

In the meantime, the portress examined the wounds of the individual confided to her charge, and succeeded in bringing him back to partial recollection. A faint animation excited his pulse, and gave tokens of a feeble existence not yet passed away, but soon to evaporate. She placed him upon a bed, and opened her drawers to seek for rags, to staunch the blood that flowed from many places at the same time. But either she had not the linen she looked for, or else the confusion and agitation of her ideas so bewildered her senses, that she could not find a single morsel. In this dilemma she bethought herself of the well-known charitable and compassionate disposition of Mrs. Clayton; and hurried to the apartments occupied by that lady, to solicit the wherewith to arrest the ebbing tide of life that issued from the wounds of the dying man. Her request was instantly granted; and Mrs. Clayton, accompanied by her brother-in-law, descended to aid the portress in her humane task. Belle-Rose had opened his eyes during her absence, and was gazing wildly around him when his benefactors entered the lodge. His glance encountered that of Mr. Clayton, and a smile of satisfaction animated his pallid countenance. He raised himself with considerable difficulty on his right arm—repulsed the portress who advanced towards the bed bearing linen and bandages in her hands—and beckoned Mr. Clayton to approach.

“I have but a short time to live,” said Belle-Rose in a faint voice almost depressed to a mere whisper, “and I am desirous of quitting this world in peace



with all men. You are acquainted with Alfred de Rosann—he was my friend—my benefactor. He acted liberally towards me—and I repaid his kindness by ingratitude. There breathes not a nobler character than De Rosann—tell him I said so in my last moments. Tell him that I—yes, I—was one of the three robbers who endeavoured to despoil him of the treasures which were confided to his charge by a mercantile house in London, and which were destined for a person named Leblond, in Paris. Tell him I have done him that grievous wrong—but do not forget to say—”

“And his attachment to Miss Robson, the banker’s daughter,” cried Mr. Clayton, unable to restrain his impatience, “the proposal he made for her hand—his repulse—his disappointment—”

“All false—all pure invention—all calumny !” returned Belle-Rose, hanging down his head, and stifling a sob.

“God be thanked !” said Mr. Clayton : “his defence is as true and correct as I could have wished it to be. We need not wait for Mr. Robson’s letter.”

“If my levity—my unpardonable misrepresentations have done him harm in your estimation,” continued Belle-Rose, “hasten to render him the justice he deserves ; for I repeat, that there exists not a nobler character than Alfred de Rosann !”

“Bind his wounds—take care of him—comfort his poor soul—and assure him of pardon on the part of De Rosann ;—I accept his apologies in the name of my friend—tell him he is forgiven,” cried Mr. Clayton in a hurried tone of voice ; and without waiting for a reply, he hastily left the lodge to the astonishment of the portress, who nevertheless proceeded to dress the wounds of the dying man. But all her care was vain—Belle-Rose’s last hour was come—and no human agency could add another day to his existence, nor extend his mis-spent life. He died insensible to the feeble endeavours of those around to procrastinate the fatal moment—and in his death he enjoyed a more honourable reputation than he had acquired during



the numerous years he had devoted to dissipation, to folly, and to crime. He was subsequently interred in the cemetery of *Père la Chaise*; and a simple cross of wood marks the resting place of one of the heroes of July, 1830. Peace be to his soul !

Mr. Clayton hurried to the drawing-room, where Eloise was seated in silent horror at the dreadful work of slaughter that was being performed outside ; and he embraced his niece with a cry of joy. He forgot the terrors of the revolution—the vicinity of carnage—the deadly deeds that were done in the streets: all he thought of—all he cared for at the moment, was that De Rosann was innocent. Some minutes elapsed ere Eloise could prevail upon her uncle to moderate his sudden and apparently misplaced felicity ; but when he had so far composed himself as to relate the brief confession of the penitent Belle-Rose, the mind of Eloise experienced a relief, that brought tears to her eyes. She wept through excess of feeling—and those feelings were of happiness.

With what delight did she now contemplate her generous defence of her lover's conduct ; and how heart-broken would she have been, had she ever given credit to the calumniating tales which had prejudiced her mind against him. Her confidence was not bestowed on one whose treacheries had rendered him unworthy of her regard ; and she felt proud of possessing his love, and of having undertaken his cause with a perseverance that had not failed to offend Mr. Clayton, and that had drawn upon her the reproaches of her mother. Time had proved the truth of her assertion—time had justified her firmness in advocating the part of her lover. This conviction of his permanent fidelity was an ample reward for all that she had been obliged to endure ; and her countenance was radiant with joy as she returned her uncle's caresses.

One fear, however, still harassed her, and soon recalled the melancholy expression of alarm and anxiety to her cheek. She was afraid that Alfred might expose himself to danger, or might even be rash enough



to take an active part in the civil conflict. Mr. Clayton entertained the same suspicions; but he affected a certainty, which he did not feel, that our hero would not interfere in the disordered state of affairs. At the request of his niece, he accordingly wrote the following note to De Rosann:—

“My dear Alfred,

“I have wronged you, and have at length discovered my error. Forgive me, my friend—and believe that the tale must have been very specious to have so grossly misled me. I hope to see you here as speedily as possible.

“Yours, affectionately,  
WILLIAM CLAYTON.”

“*July 29th*, 1830.

This laconic epistle was not despatched to Meurice's Hotel until the following morning; as no one could be found to venture into the streets until a proclamation, signed by General Lafayette, publicly declared that the strife was concluded, and that the citizens of Paris might venture abroad in perfect safety.

Three days were thus sufficient for an incensed people to cast off their chains, and hurl a tyrant from his throne. The rash king, when it was too late, in vain sent messengers to the chiefs of the revolutionary body: no compromise could be made with a monarch who had violated the liberties of his subjects, and had drawn upon himself by his own misdeeds a righteous doom. Exiled from his native land, abandoned by the numerous dependants he had lately seen humbling their heads to his august presence, the royal wanderer left his regal halls at St. Cloud, and fruitlessly deplored the follies that had deprived him of a crown he might have worn in peace. The dynasty of the Bourbons was thus overthrown—the tri-coloured banner waved on every house—the news of this great and sudden blow was quickly spread over the face of the country—and till the end of time must the Genius of France, as she turns the pages of her favourite nation's annals, point to the one on which are recorded the glorious events of the 27th, 28th, and 29th of July, 1830.



## CHAPTER XVII.

## THE DECISION.

ON the morning of the thirtieth of July, Mrs. Clayton, her brother-in-law, and Eloise, were seated at the breakfast table, and were engaged in conversation, the topic of which might be easily divined by the downcast looks of our heroine, the impatient gestures of her uncle, and the forced tranquillity of her mother.

“Although the innocence of De Rosann be proven in the affair relative to the banker’s daughter,” said Mrs. Clayton, replying to an observation just made by her brother-in-law, “my resolutions still remain the same : and Eloise must endeavour to conquer her unhappy passion.”

“Say no more upon the subject,” cried Mr. Clayton with an unusual petulance. “I perfectly remember your vow—and begin to think it is impossible to convince you of its injustice. At the same time allow me to observe, that I would willingly give half of my fortune—nay, the whole—were it possible for De Rosann to discover the particulars of your father’s sudden disappearance, and the fate of his property.”

“Happily the days of fairies and enchanters have gone by,” returned Mrs. Clayton triumphantly: “I have therefore no reason to repent my asseveration, nor will you have an opportunity of parting with the moiety of your fortune.”

“I am afraid not,” said Mr. Clayton drily, and in a tone of voice that plainly indicated his desire to drop the conversation.

Mrs. Clayton would have continued the unwelcome



topic, had not a violent knock at the door startled her as she was about to speak. Eloise's heart palpitated violently—a well-known step was heard on the oaken floor of the anti-chamber—and a servant announced Mr. De Rosann. Forgetful of her mother's presence, Eloise arose and threw herself into his arms: and the lovers indulged in a long and fervent embrace. Mrs. Clayton sat stupefied upon her chair, undecided how to act, and trembling with emotions she could scarcely account for. Alfred saluted her respectfully, and turned to grasp the hand of Mr. Clayton, who made up by the cordiality of his welcome for the coldness of his stern but conscientious sister-in-law.

"I have only this moment received your note, or I should have hastened hither before," said De Rosann, addressing himself to Mr. Clayton.

"It was dated yesterday, but was not sent till this morning," returned that gentleman.

"For three days and three nights I have not been to the hotel," continued Alfred: "I have laboured in the defence of my country's rights."

"What! did you engage in the strife—in the revolution?" exclaimed Eloise, turning pale at the bare idea of her lover's danger, although it was now past.

"I did my duty, Eloise," cried our hero, a glow of satisfaction and pride animating his countenance: "I led a gallant band to the aid of my fellow countrymen that fought in the cause of freedom; and I have ere now been informed of the death of the unfortunate Belle-Rose, whom I rescued from destruction."

"Was it you that brought Belle-Rose hither?" cried Mr. Clayton in astonishment. "I wonder how the portress could fail to mention the circumstance?"

"She has just explained to me her motives," answered De Rosann; "and I could not do otherwise than approve of her delicacy and forethought."

"The same motives must account for her silence concerning yourself, when the dying sinner confessed the falsity of the calumnies he had uttered against you, and that prejudiced you in my estimation. But



let us forget the trivial misunderstanding," said Mr. Clayton, again grasping our hero's hand with affectionate warmth ; "and do you recount to us the history of your adventures in London."

"In the first place," began Alfred, "I must inform you of my especial good fortune relative to La Motte."

"The villain who deceived you—was he not?" interrupted Mr. Clayton, turning towards our hero, and preparing to listen with the greatest attention.

"The same," said De Rosann. "I met him in London, and exposed his conduct to a worthy individual he was endeavouring to deceive, as he deceived me. Shortly after this occurrence, I was sent for to attend his death-bed. I went to assure him of my full pardon, and to breathe consolation to his departing spirit. He died, and left me the heir to his whole property, which amounted to upwards of forty thousand pounds, besides a small legacy set apart to discharge a just debt."

"Bravo !" shouted Mr. Clayton, rubbing his hands together, and repeating the word several times to demonstrate his joy, while Eloise congratulated her lover with an expressive glance, and Mrs. Clayton maintained a stubborn silence.

"Thus fortune was favourable to me in that instance," continued our hero, when the uncle had relapsed once more into an attitude of attention, and the niece had received a smile as a return for the tender look she gave De Rosann: "nor did that same capricious fortune embitter her honied cup by poisoned dregs. Leblond fulfilled the promise he made me in the letter I enclosed to you, Mr. Clayton; and there is my pardon," added Alfred, throwing a paper upon the table.

"Here are two different documents," said Mr. Clayton.

"Ah! I forgot to state in its place," returned De Rosann, "that La Motte drew up and signed a full account of his nefarious cheat practised upon me, and



caused it to be witnessed by the French consul, the more fully to establish my innocence."

"Better and better!" exclaimed Mr. Clayton, glancing towards his sister-in-law, and displaying the precious deeds with as much satisfaction as if they were his own, and as if he stood in our hero's situation.

De Rosann and Eloise again exchanged significant looks of love and delight; and the former continued in the following terms:—

"But this is not all. I have made you acquainted with my accession of property—my pardon—and my justification. A more important circumstance still remains to be explained. My journey to England, and absence from this country, have not been without effect: let us now see the result my toils are calculated to produce. Mrs. Clayton," he said, addressing himself to that lady, "I once sought your daughter's hand as her equal—as an eligible suitor, and I was accepted. Misfortune—the treachery of a supposed friend reduced me to humiliation, to infamy, and to shame. You then revoked your consent to our future union—my prospects were wretched in the extreme—and perhaps you did right. But again—as an equal—as an innocent man—as a person possessing a competency—as a gentleman, in fine, I demand a renewal of your approbation to my marriage with Miss Clayton. You shake your head—you are impatient, madam—you mean to refuse."

"I hope not," cried Mr. Clayton, sitting uneasily on his chair, and glancing first at his sister-in-law, then at his niece, and lastly at Alfred, whose countenance was flushed with the excitement he underwent as he spoke to Mrs. Clayton.

"I am sorry, M. De Rosann—I congratulate you most sincerely on your late successes—but the hand of Eloise—" and the stern parent hesitated; for her eye caught sight of the ashy pale countenance of her daughter, and she feared to proceed.

"Well, then," exclaimed our hero, hastening to re-



lieve himself and her he adored of a terrible suspense, "suffer me to show you that I am more generous than you, madam—and that I bear you no ill-will; no rancorous feeling do I entertain against you. I shall go hence and be unhappy—but first I must perform a duty which Providence alone could have charged me to acquit."

"No—no—you shall be happy!" shouted Mr. Clayton, casting terrible glances at his sister-in-law.

"Allow me to say two words more," interrupted Alfred, mildly, "and I have done. Mrs. Clayton," he continued, turning towards that lady, and addressing himself to her, "will you permit me to inquire if you be acquainted with the real name and rank of your late father?"

"Certainly not!" cried Mr. Clayton, starting from his seat; "and will you believe the ridiculous vow my sister has made relative to your engagement with her daughter? She declares that her approbation shall alone be elicited when you develop those very mysteries to which you have just alluded."

"'Tis singular!" exclaimed De Rosann, a gleam of irrepressible joy illuminating his handsome features. "Then it remains for me to perform the rest."

"How? what?" shouted the uncle, throwing himself upon his chair, and resigning himself to the bitter conviction that Alfred was about to manifest a proper spirit, and retort upon Mrs. Clayton as she deserved, but in a manner that would break the heart of Eloise.

"Madam, you are the daughter of the Marquis de Denneville!" said our hero, addressing himself to Mrs. Clayton.

"Impossible!" cried the mother, fixing the eye of astonishment upon De Rosann, and waiting with breathless anxiety to hear more.

"Yes—madam," he continued; "you are the daughter of the Marquis de Denneville. Your property, amounting to thirty-two thousand pounds, English money, is at your disposal. There are the deeds which prove the truth of my statement, and which will esta-



blish your claim to your father's wealth:" and our hero handed the mysterious papers to their legitimate owner.

"A miracle! a miracle!" thundered Mr. Clayton, once more starting from his chair. "The vow must be fulfilled—the oath must be accomplished. Alfred, there is your future bride—her mother cannot recall her words."

"Nor will she endeavour to do so," cried Mrs. Clayton. "M. De Rosann, you have done me a service I can never forget—you have developed a mystery it has long been my sincerest wish to fathom—and the least I can do to demonstrate my gratitude, is to accord you the hand of my daughter. I shall moreover settle the wealth thus providentially recovered upon her; and at my death all I now possess will alike devolve to you and to Eloise."

De Rosann and Eloise rushed into each other's arms, and indulged in a second embrace as long and ardent as the first. Mr. Clayton clapped his hands together in an ecstasy of joy, and his sister-in-law was not very sorry that the affair had terminated thus amicably.

Our hero now related the providential manner whereby he became possessed of the documents that had worked so favourable a change in his favour. He accounted for the sudden deviation from his intentions of hastening to Paris, according to his agreement with Mr. Clayton at the farm-house—he detailed the various treacheries of Belle-Rose, and the difficulty he experienced in recovering the precious papers; he related more fully than before his adventures at the galleys, his escape, the history of Champignon, and the hopeless attachment of Selina Robson. He did not forget the duel—the circumstance of the horses' running away with the post-chaise, in which he travelled from London to Southampton—and the particulars of the attempt made upon his property by Belle-Rose, and the two accomplices in that daring deed. At one time he excited the laughter of his auditors by the recital of the freaks of the deceased Belle-Rose, or the extra-



vagances and credulity of Champignon ; at another he caused them to shudder at the idea of the dangers he had himself encountered. But when he narrated the awful confession of François, and informed Mrs. Clayton that her late father had died by the hands of a murderer, that lady's tears burst forth in torrents, and the eyes of Eloise were also moistened with the crystal drops of sorrow. De Rosann and Mr. Clayton shared in their emotion, although not to so great a degree. The documents, which had been of such service to our hero were then produced and read. They consisted of letters received by the Marquis de Denneville from the father of the existing Mr. Clayton, of copies of the several replies that nobleman had written, and of an epistle from the head partner of a mercantile house in Paris to the said nobleman, stating that the eight hundred thousand francs were duly handed over to him by the Marquis's servant, Gustave, and that a proper notice of the deposit had been sent, according to orders, to the firm of Messieurs Robson, Son, and Co., Threadneedle-street, London.

"Pardon me, madam," said Alfred to Mrs. Clayton, when he had concluded reading aloud the last letter, "for not having immediately given up those precious deeds, when I discovered to whom they belonged. But the idea, that they might eventually serve me in forwarding my suit with a certain person," he continued, gazing tenderly at Eloise, "and the conviction that no very long interval would ensue before I should deliver them to you, made me guilty of so unwarranted an act of audacity and boldness."

"No apology is necessary, my dear Alfred," returned Mrs. Clayton, wiping away her tears, and smiling as she was wont to do a year before at our hero. Eloise did not fail to notice this happy change in her mother's behaviour towards De Rosann ; and her bosom swelled with the purest sentiments of delight and joy.

The moment the metropolis was again tranquil and



quiet, Alfred mixed in the fashionable society of the Chausseé d' Antin, together with his destined bride, her mother and uncle; and not one of the gay acquaintances he had known in the times of his former prosperity, and that had deserted him on the day of tribulation, failed to offer him their congratulations and address him in flattering speeches. He returned their salutations and fulsome homage to an ascendant star, with the politeness that was so characteristic of his manners; because he did not choose to let them perceive he ever felt their commiseration or disdain.

Eloise was universally admired in the fashionable circles of Paris. Happiness produces a wonderful effect upon the personal appearance of individuals, because the mind and the body are so dependent on each other, and are intimately united together. An additional bloom appeared upon the cheeks of our fair heroine—not the rude buxom glow of country health—but the chaste vermilion dye that mingles so sweetly with the adjacent white. Her eyes flashed tenderness and delight, whenever they encountered the glance of her lover: and as those two beings trod the mazy dance together, or turned in the voluptuous waltz, the beholder might well perceive that they were a pair well adapted and fitted for each other. Indeed their dispositions, their tastes, and their beauty, so nearly corresponded, that, had not Mrs. Clayton eventually approved of their union, her cruel dissent could not have been extenuated under any plea.

Mr. Clayton was as happy as his niece and his young friend. He appeared to grow suddenly younger: and if his years did not actually diminish, his gaiety increased to a considerable amount. Eloise was now ever ready to play and sing to her kind uncle; and her talents in these divine arts were put to the test generally twice a day. De Rosann assisted in these innocent amusements, and seldom past a minute away from his beloved Eloise more than he was obliged.

Alfred did not forget his promise to Mr. Robson. He recollected with the sincerest sentiments of gratitude the paternal kindness of the worthy banker, and



wrote him a long account of the revolution, the active part he had taken in it, the delivery of the documents to their legal owner, and any other circumstance which he thought would prove interesting to his London friends. He moreover added that he experienced a successful result at the hands of the arbitress of his fate in the tender *affaire de cœur*; but complained of the wedding day not yet being fixed. He concluded by desiring his kindest remembrances to the whole family, and begged Mr. Robson to charge him at any time with all commissions he might wish to be executed in Paris.

A month had nearly passed away since the glorious change that had taken place in the political affairs of France, and Mrs. Clayton had as yet said nothing concerning the period when her daughter should become De Rosann's bride. Our hero anxiously waited for Mr. Clayton to make some remark upon the interesting subject; and at length ventured to implore his interference to procure the final settlement of the happy day. The first of September was accordingly fixed upon: and the reader need scarcely be informed that it was looked forward to by the tender couple with the impatience which true love inspires in the most chaste and immaculate minds.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

### CONCLUSION.

ON the first of September De Rosann led his blooming and blushing bride to the altar. They were married at the *Mairie* of the first *Arrondissement*\* of Paris between the hours of three and four in the after-

\* Paris is divided into twelve wards or *arrondissements*, in every one of which there is a town-hall called a *Mairie*, independent of the great Hotel de Ville.



noon, in the presence of Mrs. Clayton, her brother-in-law, the mayor, the notary, and a few friends invited to witness the performance of the ceremony. They then proceeded to the church of Saint Hyacinth or the *Assumption*; and the nuptials were solemnly blessed by the priest in the sight of heaven.

Do not imagine, gentle reader, that when the holy bands of matrimony were thus tied and consecrated by the civil and religious authorities, according to the excellent laws of France, that the happy bridegroom and his gentle bride hastened to the country to pass their honey-moon alone together. Such is not the custom of the French. They returned to the apartment occupied by the family in the Rue des Pyramides; and in the evening the whole street echoed to the sounds of music and the tread of the dancers. De Rosann and Eloise graced the magnificent ball with their presence; and at one o'clock in the morning our hero hastily threw a cloak around his bride, conducted her to a carriage, and bore her away to the dwelling he had prepared for her reception in the Rue de Castiglione.

Leblond's promise to our hero was not forgotten. When Louis Philippe was firmly established on the throne, and when amidst his numerous cares he had time to think of the individuals to whom he was indebted for his crown, as France was for her freedom, De Rosann received the Cross of the Legion of Honour, a lucrative and sinecure situation, and a permanent pension.

A year after their marriage, Eloise presented her husband with a son and heir: he was called Alfred in honour of his father. In 1833 their union was blessed with a girl, whom they named Eloise.

Mrs. Clayton died shortly subsequent to the birth of the little Alfred: and Mr. Clayton then took up his abode with his nephew and niece. Every afternoon, at about three o'clock, he may be seen taking his usual walk in the gardens of the Tuileries. In the evening he visits the Opera or the Porte St. Martin,



dividing his time and his attention between the music of Rossini or Meyerbeer, and the prose of Pixericourt or Alexander Dumas. He is always the first to purchase the last new novel of Paul de Kock, De Balzac or Georges Sand; and is a constant subscriber to the *Constitutionnel* and the *Gazette des Tribunaux*. He has entirely lost his English tastes and manners, and has imbibed everything that is French. Even his very hat has a conical shape verging towards a peak, and is curiously curled at the brim. He has only retained his English prejudices.

Champignon accidentally heard of our hero's happy marriage and establishment in Paris, and wrote him a complimentary letter on the occasion. The epistle concluded with a request that De Rosann would interest the government in the gastronome's favour, and procure him a full pardon: "for," said Champignon in his own language, "I flutter like a fowl when a Gendarme passes by my door, or enters my shop to purchase a *cervelas sans ail*." De Rosann readily complied with the wishes "of the best cook in Europe," and succeeded in his demand for the indulgence thus pathetically solicited. Champignon was so overjoyed at the event of his supplication, that he gave an immense *paté de foi gras* to the postman who brought him the welcome despatch, and regaled the respectable functionary with such frequent libations of maraschino, that the letters, instead of being distributed to their different addresses, were carefully consigned to the gutter, where their guardian himself lay down—doubtless for the purpose of protecting them.

No sooner had Champignon received his pardon, than he dropped the name of Citron as unworthy of him, and reassumed his own. But fearful that this sudden change might appear singular to his customers, he caused upwards of ten thousand circulars to be printed and spread over the town of St. Malo, to inform the public that particular reasons, which he could not immediately explain, obliged him



to vary his nomenclature. He still continues his lucrative trade, ceases to deplore the fall of the Cadran Rouge, and rides out into the country every morning on his donkey to purchase the fowls that have died in the night, or that have been killed by the wanton mischief of vagabond boys.

Louis Dorval built a neat dwelling on the sight of his ruined mansion, and found a good customer for his poultry and eggs in Champignon. His wife recovered from the sick bed on which she was lying when we first made mention of her; and although neither she nor her husband be important characters in our history, we love to assure the reader of their prosperity and happiness.

And what of Selina Robson? She has not again seen the object of her ill-fated attachment—but she hears of him often—and never mentions his name without a sigh. Her grief has moderated into a settled melancholy;—she seldom enters into society, or joins in any party of pleasure. She is not absolutely wretched: but her countenance has not the expression of gaiety that once animated it. Several eligible offers have been made to her; and she has declined them all. Her heart is deeply wounded—it is not however broken: the scar has healed—the mark still remains, and still gives pain. Music draws tears from her eyes—a romance makes her weep like a child. She has notwithstanding become excessively fond of reading gloomy tales; for she finds in the history of disappointed passion those associations of sympathising ideas that console as they grieve, and that teach her how all mankind are more or less subject to misfortune while they excite her most sensitive feelings.

With regard to Markham one word will suffice: he finished his career a miserable exile at Botany Bay.

The reader will probably recollect the little girl who sang Orlando's song in the streets of St. Malo. The songstress was Jeannette. Her old grandmother



died only a few days after Belle-Rose and De Rosann honoured her cottage with their presence; and Claude—the Draconic peasant whose ideas of justice were so rigorously severe—left the miserable hut with his interesting daughter, and allured her to turn her musical talents to advantage. She succeeded to the utmost of her own and her father's wishes, and soon became celebrated at St. Malo as the "*jolie chanteuse*" of national airs. Her reputation followed her to Paris, whither she accompanied her sire to try their fortune in the metropolitan city—the centre of all that is polite, learned, luxurious, and dissipated. In the *cafés* and at the *tables d'hôte* of the various hotels, Jeannette speedily procured for herself a hearty welcome by the melody of her voice and her blameless character; and not long after the birth of his second child, our hero recognised the songstress in the Café de Paris, where he happened to be dining with a party of friends.

What more have we to relate? France appreciates the blessings of peace, of national freedom, of just laws, and of a virtuous monarch. She no longer sighs for empty glories and vain honours. She has united her hand to that of England—the two puissant sovereigns have allied their respective forces—and nought but the most beneficial results can ensue. Let us therefore hope for a permanent establishment of those bounties which peace and tranquillity shed around; and let us not wish to see the bloody standards of war again raised amongst civilized and enlightened nations.

THE END.













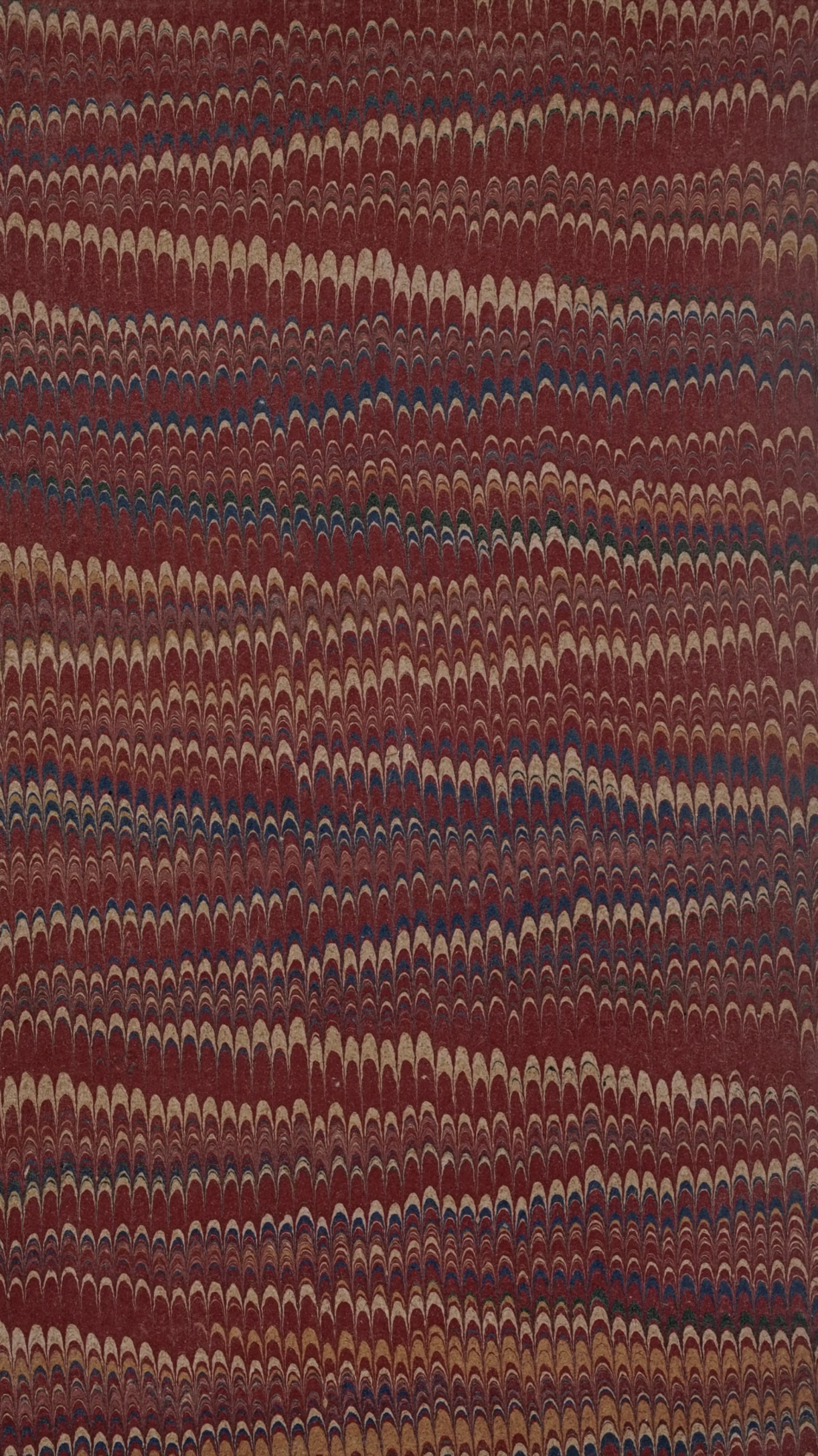


















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